

WITTGENSTEIN AND HIS INFLUENCE
ON
CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH PHILOSOPHY

A Thesis submitted for the
Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
at
the University of Allahabad.

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P R E F A C E

If the greatness of a philosopher is to be judged by the influence he exercises, then Wittgenstein is one of the great philosophers of our times. There is no doubt, whatsoever, that he is one of the most influential philosophers of the twentieth century. His books (the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations*) are among, if not at the head of, the half-dozen most influential philosophical books of the century in the English-speaking world.¹ He had the rare genius to see problems in entirely new perspectives, and to raise doubts about things which are taken for granted. It is this ability of Wittgenstein which made him restless with the traditional conceptions of philosophy and which made him repudiate his own influence. It is said that he inspired two important movements of philosophy namely, Logical Positivism, and the Analytic or Linguistic Movement, both of which he rejected. However, even the

1. "The Passionate Philosopher" *TLS*, May, 1, 1939.

distortions of his ideas are of great philosophical interest. It is, therefore, my task to make an attempt, knowing fully my limitations, to understand the thought of this great philosopher and of those who have come under his influence.

Not that his greatness is merely due to the enormous influence he exercised over others. He is great because of his honest and complete devotion to philosophical problems. He was not an academic thinker. Rather he had a strong hatred for the professional thinkers. He had a consuming passion for philosophy and, as Erich Heller says, "the thought of losing his gift for philosophy made him feel suicidal."² That is one reason why Wittgenstein made no attempt to do philosophy in what is known as the grand style. In his first work, the *Tractatus*, he expresses his ideas in crisp, short and aphoristic sentences; and in the *Investigations*, as he himself says, he travels over 'a wide field of thought criss-cross in every direction,³ and the book is really only an album,⁴ consisting of 'a number of sketches of landscapes.⁵ Nowhere we find him arguing his case systematically. He expresses his thoughts just as they occur to his mind. This makes his works very difficult to interpret. My apology for the present work is

2. Heller, E., *Ludwig Wittgenstein, Encounter*, Sept., 1959.

3. *PI*, Preface, p. ix.

4. *Ibid*, p. ix

5. *Ibid*, p. ix

that it is neither an introduction, nor a commentary to his works. It rather concerns with only the fundamental ideas of his philosophy and the main features of his influence. Further, my purpose is to clear up my own understanding than to illuminate that of others.

I have tried to interpret the main features of his thought at both the stages of his philosophical adventures. The popular interpretation, that the earlier Wittgenstein has nothing to do with the later one, is based on the misunderstanding of his thought. His main problem, in both the *Tractatus* and the *Philosophical Investigations*, is to make an inquiry into the necessary conditions of meaning. In both the works his field of investigation is ordinary language. But his findings are, no doubt, different. In the *Tractatus* he developed the naming and picture theories of meaning which he demolished in the *Investigations*. Here he explained meaning in terms of use. These views about meaning led him to two different conceptions of philosophy. But even here we find some points of resemblance. In both the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations*, philosophical problems are said to be linguistic and can be dissolved by a careful study of language.

My next aim is to understand Wittgenstein's influence on other philosophers and philosophical movements. His works are written in an almost aphoristic form and there

is no agreement as to how they should be interpreted. Nevertheless, they have had a great influence among philosophers, particularly on logical positivists and linguistic analysts. My purpose, however, is not to discuss all of them in detail. I am concerned, rather, with the main trends of English philosophy as it developed under Wittgenstein's influence.

Accordingly, I have divided the present dissertation into eight chapters. The first chapter deals with the historical background of the *Tractatus*. An understanding of historical matters is necessary with the *Tractatus*. As James Griffin says, "Half the battle is sometimes won just by knowing that here in the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein is arguing against this in Frege or that in Russell, or that such-and-such in the *Tractatus* is Wittgenstein's renovation of Russell's Theory of Types or his expansion of Frege's *Grundgesetze* theory of definition."

In the second and third chapters, I have discussed the main tenets of the *Tractatus*. As will be clear, my discussion is necessarily selective. I have not discussed the technical problems of logic and mathematics. I have also made no efforts to discuss Wittgenstein's later views on these topics. My primary concern is rather with his conceptions of meaning, language and philosophy itself.

I have tried to refute the views that Wittgenstein's purpose in the *Tractatus* is to construct an ideal language for Philosophy which would replace ordinary language, and that his elementary propositions are observation-statements. Both the Russellian and the positivistic interpretations of the *Tractatus* are misleading. The *Tractatus* aims at exhibiting the structure of all languages, not a particular kind of language. Next, elementary propositions are about states of affairs, not about experience, and certainly not about sense-data.

In the fourth chapter, I have discussed Wittgenstein's influence on Logical Atomism, Logical Positivism and some individual thinkers. The nature of his influence on Logical Positivism is a hotly controversial subject. The popular interpretation puts the *Tractatus* in the positivistic tradition. But it is not a book on positivism and anything of the nature of an empirical investigation is not traceable in its pages. Nonetheless it is equally true that the *Tractatus* exerted a great influence on Logical Positivism; and some of its doctrines are closely connected with the main tenets of the latter.

In the fifth chapter I have considered the later Wittgenstein's rejection of the Tractarian doctrines. Wittgenstein's criticism of his earlier views led to the downfall of both Logical Atomism and Logical Positivism in particular, and of all arbitrary conceptions of language

and philosophy in general. The importance of this chapter lies in the fact that the later doctrines of Wittgenstein grow out of these criticisms and can be fully understood only in the light of them. Moreover they help us in understanding his earlier views in the correct perspective.

The sixth and seventh chapters are devoted mainly to the Philosophical Investigations. Wittgenstein worked his way out of the Tractatus in the lectures available to us in the shape of the Blue and Brown Books and we get his final ideas in the Investigations. In these chapters I have tried to give a general survey of the main ideas of his later works, and also to allay some misgivings about them. I have also pointed out, in the end, his mistakes, and hinted at the direction for further development.

The last chapter deals with the influence of the later Wittgenstein. First, I have tried to distinguish the nature of Wittgenstein's influence from that of Russell, Moore and English empiricists. Secondly, I have discussed the salient features of his influence. Thirdly, I have discussed the two main groups of ordinary language philosophy. The first comprises those philosophers who were influenced more or less directly by Wittgenstein himself. This movement is known as Cambridge Philosophy, and its chief exponent is John Wisdom. The other main group of ordinary language philosophers grew up at Oxford under the leadership of Hyle and Austin. Briefly speaking, the Oxford philosophers and those who follow their path, tend to be

more interested in the details of ordinary language and in drawing general philosophical conclusions, while the members of the former group are interested rather in the diagnosis of specific problems. Both the groups, however, go beyond Wittgenstein in their own way and adopt their own techniques. Evidently the present work is confined in its scope, its humble aim being a clarification of Wittgenstein's thoughts and pointing his place in the philosophic world.

The present work owes its inspirations to the earlier expositions of the problems of contemporary philosophical thinking by Dr. S. Datta, during my post-graduate studies. Ever since then I have been deeply attracted by these problems. But for the constant encouragement and guidance of Dr. Datta this work would not have achieved its present form. For all this I owe him a debt of gratitude too deep for words.

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July, 1968.

ABBREVIATIONS

BD	The Blue and Brown Books.
EB	Notebooks 1914-1916.
PI	Philosophical Investigations.
RFM	Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics.
T	Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus.
A	Analysis.
ASP	Australasian Journal of Philosophy.
JP	The Journal of Philosophy
M	Mind
P	Philosophy
PAS	Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society.
PFS	Philosophy and Phenomenological Research.
PR	The Philosophical Review.
RIP	Revue internationale de philosophie.
RM	The Review of Metaphysics.
TLS	The Times Literary Supplement.

C O N T E N T S

Page

CHAPTER-I

✓ HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE TRACTARIAN PHILOSOPHY 1 - 36

Reaction against Idealism :

Idealism and the tradition of English philosophy
Bradley's living contributions. Rejection of
idealism by Russell and Moore.

Frege and Russell :

Wittgenstein's interest in mathematics and logic.
Influence of Russell and Frege on Wittgenstein.

Kant and Schopenhauer :

Kantianism and its similarity with the ideas of
Wittgenstein.

CHAPTER-II

A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE TRACTATUS LOGICO-PHILOSOPHICUS 36 - 86

General remarks :

The Tractatus, its plan and style. Importance
of the Tractatus. The Tractatus and the later
doctrines of Wittgenstein.

Fact and object :

The world. The division of the world into
facts. Necessity of facts. Language, names
and propositions. Sense and fact. Meaning
of 'fact'. Wittgenstein's conception of a
fact. Structure of a fact. Other characteris-
tics of facts. Objects. Difference between

an object and a fact. Essential characteristics of an object. Material point interpretation and sense-datum interpretation. Difficulties involved in the two interpretations. Rejection of objects and facts.

CHAPTER - III

A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE TRACTATUS LOGICO-PHILOSOPHICUS (continued)

87-151

The Picture Theory of meaning :

What is a picture? A proposition and its sense. Names and propositions. Essential characteristics of atomic propositions. Essential characteristics of a linguistic picture.

Truth-Functions :

The picture-theory of meaning leads to the view that language is truth-functional. Definite sense, analysis and elementary propositions. Difficulties involved in the notion of truth-function.

Criticism of the picture-theory :

Difficulties involved in the possible ways of writing a proposition. Rejection of the picture-theory.

Ideal Vs. Ordinary language :

Some misconceptions. Wittgenstein's real view.

Some important consequences :

Significant propositions, senseless and nonsense. Nature of philosophical questions. The mystical. Elucidation. Nature of philosophical activity.

CHAPTER - IV

INFLUENCE OF THE EARLIER WITTGENSTEIN

152-196

General remarks.
Wittgenstein's influence on Russell, Wisdom, Ramsey and others.
Wittgenstein's influence on logical positivism.
Rejection of the positivistic interpretation of the Tractatus.

CHAPTER - V

THE REJECTION OF THE TRACTARIAN DOCTRINES

197-225

A general survey of logical atomism and logical positivism :

Their assumptions about language and the world, artificial conceptions of meaning and analysis.

Transition to the later thoughts :

Notes dictated to Moore. The Blue and Brown Books.

Wittgenstein's criticism of the main doctrines of the Tractatus :

Analysis -- objects, elementary propositions.
Meaning -- words, sentences, intending.

CHAPTER - VI

A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS

226-271

Criticism of Essentialism :

There are no essences either in the world or in language. The use of general terms depends on similarities.

Language-game :

Countless kinds of words and sentences.
Innumerable functions of language. Meaning depends on use. Rules and conventions.

Objections against the above considered.

Meaning and understanding :

- They are not mental activities. Rather they depend on contents, conventions and other activities of people.

CHAPTER - VII

A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS
(continued)

272-335

Pains and Persons :

Sensation-expressions. Skepticism about the third-person sensation-expressions. Wittgenstein's analysis of the first-person sensation-expressions. Criticism of private-languages. Mentalism rejected. Wittgenstein's views about sensation-expressions. Ascription of pain to other persons. Criteria of sensation-expressions. Some objections considered.

Philosophy :

Nature of a philosophical problem. Its causes--generality, assimilation, picture. Method of doing philosophy -- description, comparison and invention of new language-games. A critical examination of Wittgenstein's views. Some suggestions.

CHAPTER - VIII

INFLUENCE OF THE LATER WITTGENSTEIN

336-402

Sources of ordinary language philosophy :

English empiricism, logical atomism, logical positivism, Moore and the later Wittgenstein.

General characteristics of contemporary English philosophy and its relation to Wittgenstein's views :

Meanings. Functions of language. Meaning and truth. Thought and language. Nature of philosophy. Method of doing philosophy.

Two main trends of linguistic philosophy :

Their general characteristics.

Wittgenstein's influence on the first group :

John Wisdom and M. L. LaSorevirts. Their agreement

and disagreement with Wittgenstein.

Wittgenstein's influence on Oxford philosophy :

General nature, Ayer, Strawson, Harnock,
Grice, Austin. Their difference from
Wittgenstein.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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(i - xii)

CHAPTER - I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE TRACTARIAN PHILOSOPHY

For a long time the scene of English Philosophy was so much dominated by German Idealism, especially Hegelianism, that Idealism was taken to be its native creed. The whole generation was led to believe that the genuine truth was to be found in the systems of Hegel and his followers; that the only tenable view in philosophy was some sort of Idealism. But near about 1900 this grandly built empire started cracking. And it was only wishful thinking and emotional bias that prevented Muirhead from seeing the truth. As the editor of Contemporary British Philosophy he expressed the view that in the systems of British Neo-Hegelians - Bradley and others -- British Philosophy came back "into the main stream of European thought"¹. He also expressed the hope that the young philosophers would continue the tradition. It is true that the Neo-Hegelians were the dominating force in the second half of the 19th century. It is also true² that "in their day and generation they were big men."

1. Contemporary British Philosophy, First Series, p. 323.

2. Paton, Contemporary British Philosophy, Third series, p. 343.

They moved even those who opposed them. Even Moore and Russell could not be exceptions. The whole philosophical atmosphere was permeated by their thinking and dominated by them. But it should not blind us to see clearly two points : that Idealism was not the native British Philosophy, it was only a foreign influence; and that just after 1900 it lost its hypnotic hold over most of the new brains. Before Bradley was even in his grave, Moore, Russell and Wittgenstein turned the table, and emerged as the prophets of new movements in philosophy. With certain differences in their positive teachings, they were united against what may be described as the common enemy - the grand mansion of Idealism. They thought that reality (they actually laughed over the capital 'R') was plurality, not unity; that knowledge makes no difference to the known; that grass is really green; that matter exists; that the common man is right (of course Wittgenstein was not wholly with Moore and Russell).

What I have said above, unless read carefully, may prove misleading. Whenever it is said that contemporary philosophy started as a revolt against Idealism, to guard against the possible misunderstanding, the following points should be fully noted :

(1) Moore and Russell started the so called new movements in philosophy not by systematically criticising all the doctrines of Idealism advocated either by Bradley

or any one else. They simply rejected it.

(2) I have written the words 'the so called new movements,' to emphasise the fact that the revolution was not wholly new. It should not be described as a break with tradition. We are sometimes told not only that British (or English-speaking) philosophy of the recent past is not what philosophy used to be, which no doubt is to be expected, but that it is something of a quite different sort from what it had been by long tradition; it is implied that this must merit concern or even dismay. In this idea there is, not no truth at all,³ but there is in it also a measure of historical falsehood." Not Idealism but empiricism is the genuine British tradition. Hence the new philosophers except in their mathematico-logical studies, were in full agreement with the traditional English philosophy.

(3) Thirdly, there are certain points in Bradley which are still alive, and he still deserves our praise for either raising or formulating them.

It is profitable to discuss these factors, but for the sake of brevity I shall take them together. Bradley placed himself in the tradition of Hegel, Lotze and Sigwart—the tradition of idealism. He had only loath and contempt for what he described as the school of "Experience", which

3. Warnock, G.J., English Philosophy Since 1900,

was advocated by Locke, Hume, and Mill. My purpose here is not to summarise his system, but to state the ideas for which he will always be remembered.

The most important point in Bradley's philosophy is his criticism of 'psychologism'. British Associationists thought that the proper task of philosophy was to study the human mind which was, according to them, a set of mental ideas. Ideas were identified with the images in the mind. Thus the realm of psychical facts became the genuine field for philosophical research. Bradley expressed his anger in these words : "In England we have lived too long in the psychological attitude." He showed that ideas are not particulars. He said in his cryptic but forceful language that they are universals, and universals marry only universals. Association is possible only among universals which means that associationism which tried to link up the particulars is false. By this theory, he laid axe upon the roots of the empiricist view of logic. He strengthened this idea by his theory that idea as 'meaning' is different from the idea as 'image'. Even if images are inevitable they are only vehicles of 'meaning.' Images can never convey meaning unless they are used in a judgment, and when they are used in a judgment they necessarily refer to something which is out of the images. The idea

4. Bradley, F.H., The Principles of Logic, 2nd edn. vol. I, p. 2.

as the subject matter of logic is different from the idea of the psychologist. Logic has nothing to do with psychology. In liberating the science of logic he has anticipated contemporary logicians. In his own time Frege was doing it, as I shall show later on. Russell and Wittgenstein were against psychologism. To them, as to Bradley, logic is a science of meanings and not of images.

The important consequence of this view of logic was the realization of the fact that the unit of knowledge is judgment and not idea (taken as particular). Judgement is a functional unity and not a mechanical combination of particulars. Frege also accepted that "judgment is a functional unity, possessing, of course, distinguishable features but not composed out of detachable pieces."⁵ Though Wittgenstein regarded propositions as "combination of names" yet he also thought that proposition and not name is the primary unit of knowledge, and names have meaning only in the proposition.

Next, according to Bradley, the grammatical form is not the real form of a judgement. Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein and all the subsequent thinkers adopted this distinction.

Next, Bradley felt that the truth-value

5. Syle, G., The Revolution in Philosophy, p. 7.

is the internal property of the judgment. There are two groups fencing on this point. On the one side of the fence are Russell and Wittgenstein (of the *Tractatus*) who maintain that a meaningful proposition is also true or false. On the other side of the fence are Frege and Strawson who hold the doctrine that a proposition may be meaningful and yet be devoid of truth-value. Bradley belongs to the first group. A judgement must have some objective reference whether it is true or false. What is judged is the case; if there is no case (existential import), the judgment ceases to be judgement.

Finally, the doctrine that idea as content is different from the idea as image, establishes not only separation of logic from psychology (as shown earlier), but brings the problem of meaning into the centre of focus. After Bradley the problem of meaning has occupied the major portion of the philosophical discussion. Ryle has excellently expressed this development : "The story of twentieth century-philosophy is very largely the story of this notion of sense or meaning."

Now, let us discuss, in brief, the theories against which Moore and Russell raised the banners of revolution. Bradley's system is known as Absolute Idealism or in short Absolutism. Bradley devours everything nameable

into the vortex of his 'dialectic' which is known as 'all blade and no handle'. He is a faithful follower of his logic and is prepared to follow the argument where it leads. In the fence of fact and logic he sides with the latter. And the pivot of his logic is the 'principle of non contradiction', which is, in his opinion, the supreme principle. Whatever is contradictory is 'unreal'. He examines, relations, qualities, thought, thing, space, time, body, mind, soul, God, truth, goodness, beauty etc., one by one and shows them to be riddled with self contradiction, and unintelligible. He could not digest the idealistic principle that thought is identical with the real. Thought has to commit suicide. The intellectual realm is necessarily the bifurcation of the 'that' and the 'what'. Every judgment presupposes the machinery of terms and relations. Relations are internal, not external; but even internal relations weave the veil of maya.

From what has been said above, two points emerge very clearly. First, Reality is a harmonious system, a unity, plurality being only appearance. Secondly, relations are internal, not external. From these considerations, Bradley derived the conclusion that common-sense is not only vulgar but also unadulterated nonsense and patent absurdity. It is against these points that Moore and Russell reacted. Russell describes the years 1899-1900 as very significant because at this time he

adopted the philosophy of Logical Atomism and the technique of Peano's mathematical logic. By this time he had completely torn off the Hegelian skin. At Cambridge he was indoctrinated with the philosophies of Kant and Hegel. All the influences led him in the direction of German Idealism, either Kantian or Hegelian, with the lonely exception of Sidgwick. But, as mentioned earlier, towards the end of 1899 he, along with Moore, rebelled against both Kant and Hegel. He says "Moore led the way, but I followed closely in his footsteps. I think the first published account of the new philosophy was Moore's article in *Mind* on 'The Nature of Judgment,'⁷ Behind this movement was not only dry logic but also their attitudes - Moore's interest in the statements of philosophers and Russell's interest in the mathematico-logical analysis of the world. Both agreed that idealism in which they were brought up was untenable. As Russell writes, Moore "was most concerned with the rejection of idealism, while I was most interested in the rejection of monism."⁸ Russell called his view 'the doctrine of external relations.' Both of them came to believe like Meinong, that facts are independent of experience.

7. Russell, B., My Philosophical Development,
p. 84.

8. Ibid. p. 84.

Hegelians condemn everything on their principle of internal relations. Russell rejected it and with it everything that they said. He writes : "consequently, when I rejected this axiom, I began to believe everything the Hegelians disbelieved. This gave me a very full universe." In his enthusiasm he believed, like Meinong, every object of thought to be real and objective. This was also unfortunate as he himself realised in his article 'On Denoting'. It is here that we find a really new and independent thinker in Russell -- a forceful architect of contemporary philosophy. It is his analysis of denoting and what he says on descriptions that moulded the direction of philosophy, especially that of Wittgenstein, as I shall try to show a little later.

Let us discuss briefly the views of Moore, the pioneer of anti-idealism. In this respect Moore is more fortunate than Russell. While the young thinkers of the post-war era took much from the former, they passed by Russell's later books with indifference. The explanation is to be found in Moore's character and practice. It is said that philosophy begins either in dissatisfaction or in wonder. Neither had its hold on Moore. He was interested in the statements said by others. Like Russell he was

also allured by idealism, but soon he found it untenable. Philosophers, it seemed to him, were trying to answer questions without realising what exactly they meant. In his early writings, he started with Bradley, and not with the British empiricists. In 'on the Nature of Judgment, and' other articles included in Baldwin's dictionary, he argued against Bradley. He pointed out that judgments are not about 'our ideas', but about what these ideas point to i.e. a concept. The concept, Moore argued like Meinong, is neither a mental fact nor any part of a mental fact. It is what we take as our object in thinking. Like a Platonic form, a concept is eternal and immutable. Moore's purpose, in this essay, (Nature of Judgment) is much like Brentano and Meinong's : to maintain the objectivity and the independence of objects of thought.¹⁰

In his article on Truth (Baldwin's dictionary) he advocated the theory of truth that it is unanalysable and simple. Russell followed it in 1904. Both Moore and Russell believed now that the world is composed of eternal and immutable concepts and propositions. Moore also defended the doctrine of external relations, and maintained that the essence of a thing is always distinct from its relations. In 1903 he wrote his epoch making article 'Refutation of Idealism' published in Mind. Thus he paved the way for

10. Passmore, J., A Hundred Years of Philosophy.
p. 205.

the further philosophical development.

Our discussion of the reaction against Idealism will remain incomplete without a brief mention of Brentano and Meinong. Russell and Moore followed them on many points, and their teachings paved the way for philosophical analysis. They influenced both phenomenologists and realists. They are best known for their analysis of mental concepts. Brentano's most important contribution to the analysis of mental phenomena is known as the doctrine of 'intentionality' or 'directedness to objects'. His pupil Meinong developed this thesis and applied it to all the difficult problems of logic and language. He made a distinction between content and object. His view is that presentations, judgments and assumptions always have objects which are independent of both the knower and his act of apprehension. He divides objects into three classes: those which exist, those which subsist and those which neither exist nor subsist but still are objects as round square. His next important contribution is his acceptance of 'objectives' which are like Moore-Russell's 'propositions'. In short the English philosophers followed Meinong in at least two respects : first, in maintaining the objectivity of facts, things, numbers, relations, universals etc., and secondly, in postulating a lot of shadowy entities in order to explain objectivity.

In the first part of this chapter I have concerned

myself with the certain points of merely historical importance. We have seen how idealism ceased to be attractive and how the new prophets emerged. For the sake of clarity, I deliberately refrained from discussing new developments in the field of Mathematics and Logic. I propose to do it now and with this I am concerned with my topic more closely. Here I shall discuss the relevant theories of those logicians and philosophers who directly influenced Wittgenstein.

It is simply difficult to surpass Wittgenstein in respect of originality. He is an entirely independent thinker at both the Tractarian and the post-Tractarian stages. What I wish to say here, therefore, about his background should not be taken to be an account of plagiarism and borrowing. Not only that he was neither of the two, he had a positive hatred for them. Intellectual honesty was the highest value for him. By mentioning the theories of Frege, Russell and others, I wish to show the nature of the problems which he took from them, and the line of solution which their valuable works suggested. But he accepted neither the problems nor their solutions without his own contribution to them. Though he has many points of agreement with Frege-Russell and Schopenhauer-Kant, yet he formulated his central problems in such a way that could strike to none of them.

Let us begin with a short account of Wittgenstein's

schooling. He was educated at home upto fourteen years of age, then for three years in Upper Austria. He became interested in machinery and decided to study engineering in Berlin where he remained until the spring of 1908. He retained this interest throughout his life and solved many philosophical problems in his own engineer's way. On leaving Berlin he went to the University of Manchester, registered himself as a research student, and carried out research in aeronautics till the fall of 1911. Von Wright reports his change to mathematics like this : "During those three years he was occupied with research in aeronautics. From his kite-flying experiments he passed on to the construction of a jet reaction propeller, which was essentially a mathematical task. It was from this time that Wittgenstein's interests began to shift, first to pure mathematics and then to the foundations of mathematics."¹¹ As von Wright tells us the first book that Wittgenstein read on mathematics was Russell's Principles of Mathematics, published in 1903. "It seems clear that this book profoundly affected Wittgenstein's development. It was probably it which led him to study the works of Frege. The 'new' logic, which in Frege and Russell had two of its most brilliant representatives, became the gateway through which Wittgenstein entered philosophy."¹²

11. Von Wright, G.H., Biographical Sketch, included in Malenka's Ludwig Wittgenstein : A Memoir, p.4
 12. Ibid, pp. 4-5.

Wittgenstein met Frege in Jena to discuss his plans with him. Frege advised him to study with Russell. He followed the advice. He was admitted to Trinity College and registered in the University from the fall of 1913. He lived there till 1913-14. Wittgenstein attended Russell's lectures and had long talks with him. He befriended with Russell and Pinson (a young mathematician) and came in contact with J.M. Keynes, G.H. Hardy and W.H. Johnson. Wittgenstein's earlier explorations were, naturally, in the realm of the problems which had already troubled Frege and Russell. "Concepts such as 'propositional function', 'variable', 'generality' and 'identity', occupied his thoughts. He soon made an interesting discovery, a new symbolism for so called 'truth-functions' that led to the explanation of logical truth as 'tautology'".¹³ It makes a discussion of Frege and Russell, however briefly, inevitable for understanding Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*.

Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, as Miss Anscombe tells us, presupposes knowledge of Frege without which it is sure to be misunderstood. "In the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein assumes, and does not try to stimulate, an interest in the kind of questions that Frege wrote about; he also takes it for granted that his readers will have read Frege."¹⁴

13. Ibid. p. 7.

14. Anscombe, G.E.M., *An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus*, p. 12.

Frege's name occurs frequently in the *Tractatus*.

Frege may, justifiably, be described as the father of logistics. However, the stimulation came from Peano. He and his followers tried to construct arithmetic on the basis of a few elementary logical ideas such as class, class-membership, class-inclusion, material implication and the product of classes; three primitive mathematical ideas, zero, number, and successor of; and five or six primitive propositions. Peano also invented a logical symbolism. But with the skeletons mentioned above in the cupboard of his system, he failed to derive arithmetic from logic. This marks the point of departure for Frege. It became obvious to him that mathematics cannot be brought at par with logic unless all the terms of mathematics can be shown to be definable in terms of logic. Thus the task facing both Russell and Frege was to define 'zero', 'number' and 'successor of' in logical terms. Frege took this task in his *Grundlagen der Arithmetik* translated into English by J.L. Austin. His task led him to discuss the problems of much more philosophical importance sadly neglected by previous logicians. These philosophical problems he discussed in various articles such as 'On Function and Concept', 'On Concept and Object', 'On Sense and Reference' etc.,

He started with the criticism of three existing theories which he names as the 'pebble and biscuits' theory, psychologism and formalism. They fail to account for all

the properties of arithmetic -- certainty and generality, independence and objectivity, and its applicability to empirical situations.

The greatest enemy of logic and mathematics according to Frege, is psychology. He tells us that the changing ideas, "the mental pictures with their origins and their transformations, are immaterial."¹⁵ "A proposition may be thought, and again it may be true, let us never confuse these two things."¹⁶ The same point he makes in his *Grundgesetze*. Here he finds the logic of his day saturated with mentalism. In this work of great value he tries to deduce the simplest laws of numbers by logical means alone. He shows that numbers are logical objects. People fail to realise it, says Frege, because they think that an object must be given to senses. He argued like Meinong that objects need not exist. "Numbers are neither spatial nor physical nor yet subjective like ideas, but nonsensible and objective."¹⁷

In his *Begriffsschrift*, which is an attempt to carry out Leibnitz's programme of devising^a perfect language, he discusses things of technical importance. Here, in the second part he gives a set of logical rules and axioms. In the third part he shows by illustration, how some

15. *Grund der Arithmetik*, p. vi.

16. *Ibid.* p. vi.

17. Quoted by Passmore in his *A Hundred Years of Philosophy*, p. 150.

important notions of the theory of order can be formulated in his own symbolism. Later on Gödel proved that a complete axiom set for all mathematics cannot be given. This proves the failure of Frege's attempt, but, as W.C. Kneale shows, Gödel could not have done ^{it} without Frege's work. ¹⁸ What is more important is, as I have said above, his rejection of psychology and epistemology. "His life long attitude was : First settle what is known, and how these known truths are to be analysed and articulated and only then can you profitably begin to discuss what makes these truths dawn upon a human being; if you try to start with a theory of knowledge, you will get no where." ¹⁹ Wittgenstein's attitude towards both psychology and epistemology is the same. Psychology is no nearer related to philosophy, than is any other natural science (Tr. 1121).

Next important problem which Frege discusses is that of formal language and proper names. "One of the main goals Frege set before himself in his intellectual career was to devise an adequate and perspicuous symbolism to express mathematical propositions and deductions." ²⁰ Frege is dissatisfied with the ordinary language and has expressed his resentment at various places. In his article 'Function'

18. Kneale, W.C., 'Gottlob Frege and Mathematical Logic', included in the Revolution in Philosophy, p. 37.

19. Anscombe and Geach, Three Philosophers, p.137.

20. Ibid, p. 131.

²¹
 he discusses some misleading propositions. In ordinary language concept expressions are used as object-expressions. A concept is predicative, and the name of an object, a proper name, is quite incapable of being used as a grammatical predicate. But ordinarily the subject of an assertion very often appears to name a concept, and proper names to function as grammatical predicates. All such assertions are, according to Frege, misleading and should be removed in a perfect language -- Begriffsschrift. Wittgenstein shows his resentment for ordinary language. Even according to him ordinary language conceals the logical form. A symbolism is needed to avoid the errors of ordinary language.²² (But I hope to show later that there is a fundamental difference between their views). Frege was, however, wrong if he thought that his convention (of perfect language) was the only logically coherent one; there are other alternatives. As Wittgenstein pointed out, what is philosophically significant is that a certain convention²³ can be followed in a satisfactory logical symbolism. According to both Frege and Russell grammatical similarity is misleading. Wittgenstein accepted it.

Frege uses the term 'Proper name' in a much wider sense, which, I will show later, cannot be acceptable to Wittgenstein. He applied it also to complex designations

21. Translations from Philosophical writings of Gottlob Frege, Geach and Black, p. 13.

22. T 3.323, 3.324 & 3.325.

23. T 3.5421.

to what are called definite descriptions. The next important point for our purpose is Frege's distinction between sense and reference. Two expressions can be 'identical in reference' -- since they mean the same object -- and yet they are different in 'sense'. The expressions '2+2' and '4' are identical in reference, otherwise they cannot refer to the same object. Similarly, they are different in sense, otherwise they cannot be informative in any sense of the term. Similar is the case with the expressions 'morning star' and 'evening star'. They have identical reference -- the planet Venus, but different senses. What is more striking is his application of this distinction to even sentences. Like proper names even sentences have both sense (Sinn) and reference (Bedeutung). According to Frege, the 'thought' of a sentence which it expresses is its 'sense', while the 'truth-value' of a sentence constitutes its reference. Thus the reference of a sentence is either the True or the False. And, therefore, he was led to believe that "Every declarative sentence concerned with the reference of its words is to be regarded as a proper name, and its reference, if it has one, is either the True or the False."

Wittgenstein accepts Frege's distinction between sense (Sinn) and reference (Bedeutung), but he rejects

24. Quoted by Passmore, in his *A Hundred Years of Philosophy*, p. 184.

his views that a sentence can be a proper name, and that an expression can have both sense and reference. According to Wittgenstein a sentence is not a proper name, and a proper name has only reference, while a sentence can have only sense. Neither the former can have sense nor the latter can refer.

An important corollary of the above theory is the problem of the relation between sense and truth. Frege maintained that an expression may be sensible even though it has no reference (no truth-value). This thesis has been recently defended by P.F. Strawson and his followers. But Wittgenstein and Russell maintained the opposite view. According to them sense is always related to the truth-value. A sensible expression must be either true or false.

Another important point is to note Frege's distinction between a function and an argument. A function, Frege says, is unsaturated, it refers to no entity. But it has a sense in the context of a sentence. And thus he gives a point of great worth : "never to ask for the meaning of a word in isolation, but only in the context of a proposition."²⁵

Frege's view is that even the best symbolian cannot informatively state what a function is; unless one already grasps it, one cannot see how the symbolian works. "These

considerations of Frege's were what led Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus* to treat the concept function as a formal concept expressible not by a proper predicate but only by a manner of symbolizing; it is only thus, in fact, that this concept is in Frege's symbolism. (And this in turn has an obvious connection with Wittgenstein's doctrine that what 'shows' or comes out, in language, cannot be stated in language).²⁶ Wittgenstein says :

That anything falls under a formal concept as an object belonging to it, cannot be expressed by a proposition. But it is shown in the symbol for the object itself. (The name shows that it signifies an object, the numerical sign that it signifies a number, etc.,)

Formal concepts cannot, like proper concepts, be presented by a function.

T +.126(3-4).

But Frege's manner of distinguishing concept from object is full of difficulties and cannot be defended.

Other points relevant for our purpose are Frege's notions of 'notion-value' and 'quantification'. Frege says that the truth-value of a proposition is its truth or falsehood as the case may be. Similarly, we owe the modern conception of quantification to Frege. Quantification rewrites expressions containing 'all' and 'some' in symbolic forms, as "For all x , x is heavy"; and "For

26. Anscombe and Geach, *Three Philosophers*, p. 147.

some x , x is heavy". These are reformulations of "everything is heavy" and "something is heavy" respectively. This device has proved of much philosophical importance and many ambiguities, otherwise unavoidable, can be removed with its help. Miss Anscombe writes about it, "And without the development of this part of logic by Frege and Russell, it is inconceivable that Wittgenstein should have written the Tractatus."²⁷

The next philosopher who, with his lectures, works and discussions, equipped Wittgenstein to explore the unmapped fields of language and logic was his teacher and friend Bertrand Russell. We have already seen how he was persuaded by Moore to leave idealism. As he himself describes a more robust sense of reality dominated his thinking : "I began to believe everything the Hegelians disbelieved. This gave me a very full universe. I believed in a world of universals, consisting mostly of what is meant by verbs and propositions."²⁸ His study of both Meinong and Frege convinced him that he was right. He expressed the same doctrine in *The Principles of Mathematics*. It arose, to say briefly, from the belief that, if a word means something, there must be something that it means. He believed seriously at that time that

27. Anscombe, G.E.M., *An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus*, p. 16.

28. Russell, B., *My Philosophical Development*, p. 68.

the sentence "The present king of France is bald" is about something denoted by the phrase "The present king of France". Happily, his flirtation with the Platonic ideas was not to last for long. His study of Cantor's proof that there is no greatest cardinal number led him to see the famous paradox of the class of classes that are not members of themselves. At first he wrote to Frege who was greatly perturbed. However, Russell took up the challenge and discovered the Theory of types which he discusses in the Principia Mathematica in detail. Confronted with difficulties, Russell introduced the ramified theory. There still remained difficulties which he tried to solve with the help of "the axiom of reducibility."²⁰ The philosophical consequence of these theories was that they aroused interest in the linguistic inquiry.

Russell had already seen the problem in his first philosophical article 'On Denoting' published in Mind, 1905. Although, the then editor of Mind Mr. Stout was reluctant to publish this article without certain modifications, it was this article which changed the course of Russell's philosophical adventure. It contained in the germinal form what has come to be known as Russell's 'Theory of Descriptions'. As Malcolm reports : "Wittgenstein believed that the Theory of Descriptions was Russell's most important production, and he once remarked

²⁰. It was only P.F. Ramsey who solved the difficulties with the help of Wittgenstein's Tractatus which Russell accepted in the 2nd edn. of the Principia Mathematica.

that it must have been an enormously difficult undertaking for him.³⁰ Russell came to realise that there is nothing denoted by "the present king of France." He thought that there must be some way in which the sentence containing the phrase "the present king of France" can be analysed, in which this phrase is no longer used. This led him to discover his new theory of denoting -- generally known as the Theory of Descriptions. The theory has been recently attacked by P.T. Geach³¹ and P.F. Strawson.³² As the theory is of great historical importance, I wish to state it in brief, to show how it might have led Wittgenstein to formulate his views on the problem of elementary propositions.

First of all, Russell realised that the grammatical structure of a proposition is not its logical form and can be misleading. (For this realisation Wittgenstein praises Russell : "..... it was Russell who performed the service of showing that the apparent logical form of a proposition need not be its real one." T 4.0031). He finds that there are denoting phrases that do not denote. Frege had thought that the phrases with the article 'the' are logically proper names. Russell finds it, now, untenable. He came to hold the view that descriptive phrases

30. Malcolm, N., Ludwig Wittgenstein : A Memoir, p. 68.

31. Geach, P.T., 'Russell's Theory of Descriptions', A 1960.

32. Strawson, P.F., 'On Referring', N. 1960.

are not denotative. By 'denoting phrase' he means such phrases as 'a man', 'some men', 'any man', 'every man', 'all men', 'the present king of France', 'the centre of mass of the solar system at the first instant of the present century', 'the revolution of the earth around the sun', 'the revolution of the sun around the earth'.³³ He explains the same point more clearly in *The Problems of Philosophy*: "By a 'description' I mean any phrase of the form 'a so-and-so, or 'the so-and-so'."³⁴ A phrase of the form 'a so-and-so' he calls an 'ambiguous', description; a phrase of the form 'the so-and-so' (in the singular) he calls a 'definite' description. Russell argues in his article "On Denoting" that both Meinong and Frege were wrong in their analysis of such phrases. Russell's theory, in nutshell, is that it is only grammatical illusion to suppose that every word or phrase does name something - an object, a quality, a relation etc. Let us confine ourselves to the definite descriptive phrases-- 'the so-and-so' form. It is easy to suppose that they are proper names. They are not, says Russell. His argument is that if a name names something, it has the same meaning in all the contexts. But if so, the sentence "the author of *Waverley* is Scott" becomes "Scott is Scott". This is absurd.^{absurd.} This is / Russell's theory of definite descrip-

33. Russell, B., "On Denoting", included in *Logic and Knowledge*, edited by Marsh, A.C., p. 41.

34. Russell, B., *The Problems of Philosophy*; p. 52.

tions offers a solution (at least it seemed so to Russell). Definite descriptions are not proper names. An important consequence of this theory is that definite descriptions in isolation have no meaning. But the sentences containing them are not meaningless. Russell contends that all the sentences containing 'definite descriptions' are not, as they appear to be, elementary propositions. It was of course Russell's great achievement.

Ramsey has described this theory as the "paradigm³⁵ of philosophy." It is easy to see why this is so. If the apparent form is not the real form of a proposition, then analysis can reveal the real logical form. For example, "the author of Waverly is Scott" is a complex proposition and analysis gives its real sense. The analysis is as follows :

- (a) at least one person wrote Waverly;
- (b) at most one person wrote Waverly;
- (c) whoever wrote Waverly was Scott.

In this way Russell's theory makes certain points both obvious and urgent. It shows, first of all, that all the words do not name. It became now compelling to know what sorts of names really name. Secondly, it shows that propositions can be analysed into simpler propositions and it is these simple propositions that reveal the real sense

35. Ramsey, F.P., The Foundations of Mathematics, and Other Essays, p. 263N. .

of the original proposition. Wittgenstein took up these points in the Tractatus and carried them to their logical extreme.

Among others who seem to have influenced Wittgenstein on certain ideas, we may mention the name of Heinrich Hertz. Wittgenstein mentions Hertz's name at two places in the Tractatus, namely, 4.04 and 6.361. He says :

In the proposition there must be exactly as many things distinguishable as there are in the state of affairs, which it represents.

They must both possess the same logical (mathematical) multiplicity (cf. Hertz's Mechanics, on Dynamic Models).

T 4.04 (1-2)

George Pitcher has quoted one of the passages which, he thinks, Wittgenstein was referring to : "The relation of a dynamical model to the system of which it is regarded as the model, is precisely the same as the relation of the images which our mind forms of things to the things themselves. For if we regard the condition of the model as the representation of the condition of the system, then the consequents of this representation, which according to the laws of this representation must appear, are also the representation of the consequents which must proceed from the original object according to the laws of this original object. The agreement between mind and nature

may therefore be likened to the agreement between two systems which are models of one another, and we can even account for this agreement - by assuming that the mind is capable of making actual dynamical models of things, and of working with them." ³⁶ And Wittgenstein says in T 4.01 (1-3) : "The proposition is a picture of reality. The proposition is a model of the reality as we think it is." Next he mentions Hertz's name in connection with what he says about mechanics. Some statements are important in this connection :

Mechanics is an attempt to construct according to a single plan all true propositions which we need for the description of the world. T 6.343.

..... But the network is purely geometrical, and all its properties can be given a priori.
T 6.35 (1)

In the terminology of Hertz, we might say : Only uniform connections are thinkable
T 6.361.

Hertz's Principles of Mechanics is divided into two parts. In the first part he shows that the subject matter of that book is 'completely independent of experience'. Thus he attempted to prove that in mechanics there is a purely a priori ingredient. The same point is mentioned in Wittgenstein's above quoted statements. These considerations clearly show that Wittgenstein was very well acquainted with Hertz's Principles of Mechanics and derived from it certain ideas about propositions as model and mechanics.

36. Hertz, H., 'The Principles of Mechanics,'
Sect. 425.

The other name I would mention is that of Lichtenberg. He used to say that in place of "I think" we should say "It thinks". Moore says that Wittgenstein accepted this change.³⁷ Wittgenstein says in the Tractatus :

"Where in the world is a metaphysical subject to be noted?"

T 5.633(1). "The thinking, presenting subject; there is no such thing." T 5.631 (1). According to Von Wright Wittgenstein esteemed Lichtenberg highly and "some of Lichtenberg's thoughts on philosophic questions show a striking resemblance to Wittgenstein's".³⁸

Now, we can safely take up the final section of this chapter. Both Russell's introduction and the popular positivistic interpretation of the Tractatus, foster the conviction that whatever Wittgenstein says about the mystical is unnecessary and superficial; that it can be easily neglected. This is certainly misinterpretation and leads one to ignore his relations to the German thinkers, particularly Kant and Schopenhauer. Any interpretation that emphasises Wittgenstein's treatment of logical technicalities at the cost of what he has to say about the mystical -- the world as totality, the God, the life, the I, the limit, the ethical, the aesthetic, the miraculous, in short, everything that eludes logic -- is

37. Moore, G.E., 'Wittgenstein's lectures in 1930-33' *Mind*, Jan. 55, rep. in *Philosophical papers* p. 308.

38. Von Wright. 'Biographical Sketch' in Malcolm's *Ludwig Wittgenstein : A Memoir*, p. 22.

sure to end in superficiality and misunderstanding. This is confirmed by Wittgenstein's own estimate of Russell's comments on the *Tractatus*. He wrote to Russell : "Now, I am afraid you haven't really got hold of my main contention, to which the whole business of logical propositions is only corollary."³⁹ Whatever he says about the inexpressible is important to his system as a whole. And it cannot be understood without some knowledge of Kant and Schopenhauer; through whose work he knew the former.

Let us begin with Schopenhauer with whose work he was directly acquainted. Von Wright writes in his 'Biographical Sketch', "If I remember rightly, Wittgenstein told me that he had read Schopenhauer's *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* in his youth and that his first philosophy was a Schopenhauerian epistemological idealism."⁴⁰ He has explicitly mentioned Schopenhauer's name in the *Notebooks*, "It would be possible to say (a la Schopenhauer) : it is not the world of Ideas that is either good or evil; but the willing subject."⁴¹ He has used several sentences in the *Notebooks* which inevitably lead to Schopenhauer's concept of Will :

39. Quoted by Anscombe in *An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus*, p. 161.

40. Von Wright, G.H., in Malcolm's *Ludwig Wittgenstein : A Memoir*, p. 5.

41. *Notebooks*, entry for 2.8.16, p. 79e.

That my will penetrates the world.

That my will is good or evil.

There are two godheads : the world and my independent I.

The thinking subject is surely mere illusion.

But the willing subject exists.

Things acquire "significance" only through their relation to my will.

As my idea is the world, in the same way my will is the world-will.

Though many of these statements do not find place in the *Tractatus*, the central idea behind them is present even there, in what he says about the I, the will and the limit.

About Kant, Wittgenstein had probably no direct knowledge. According to Von Wright "From Spinoza, Hume and Kant -- he could get only occasional glimpses of understanding." He must have known the fundamental

42. Ibid, 11.6.16, p. 73c.

43. Ibid, 8.7.16, p. 74c.

44. Ibid, 5.8.16, p. 80c.

45. Ibid, 15.10.16, p. 84c.

46. Ibid, 17.10.16, p. 80c.

47. Von Wright, G.H. Biographical Sketch included in Malcolm's Ludwig Wittgenstein : A Memoir, p. 21.

ideas of Kant through Schopenhauer's book *The World as Will and Idea* and Hertz's *The Principles of Mechanics*. However, as Stenius writes "one did not need to have read Kant to be influenced by a more or less clearly stated Kantianism; it belonged to the intellectual atmosphere in the German speaking world."⁴⁸ Wittgenstein has, explicitly mentioned certain Kantian problems both in the *Notebooks* and in the *Tractatus* :

Light on Kant's question 'How is pure mathematics possible?' through the theory of tautologies.⁴⁹

The Kantian problem of the right and the left hand which cannot be made to cover one another already exists in the plane⁵⁰

At many places in the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein has used expressions which are similar to that of Kant. For example, he says :

Only that which we ourselves construct can we foresee. T 5.556

Logic is transcendental. T 6.13(2)

Logic precedes every experience. T 5.552(2)

And the resemblance is more than merely verbal.

Wittgenstein's critique of language has been

48. Stenius, E., *Wittgenstein's Tractatus*, p. 214

49. *Notebooks*, 19.10.14, p. 15e.

50. T 6.36111.

described as 'Transcendental Linguism, and 'Linguistic
 Idealism,'⁵¹ Gensh describes it as 'Critique of Pure Language.'⁵²
 Those who do so, are aware of the fundamental similarity
 between the systems of Kant and Wittgenstein. No work of
 any Kantian philosopher is a carbon-copy of that of Kant.
 Both the post-Kantians and the neo-Kantians have adopted
 his system only after introducing the modifications that
 are succulent to their taste. Fichte, Hegel and Schopen-
 hauer are obvious examples. Wittgenstein's system is a
 new variety of Kantianism which also bears the stamps of
 mathematical logic and his own personality.

Let us see the point in detail. Kant was against
 psychologism since he found it unworthy of a priori ana-
 lysis of reason. Hence he utilised the sharpness of his
 intellect in the analysis of the a priori forms of sensi-
 bility, understanding and reason. He found that the forms
 of understanding determine the forms of experience, and
 it is only because of these forms that experience is
 possible. Wittgenstein would have no hesitation in accep-
 ting the main idea of this thesis. Like Kant Wittgenstein
 is against psychology which is, according to him, one of the
 empirical sciences. But while Kant relied on epistemology,

51. Steinbock, E., Wittgenstein's Tractatus, p. 220.

52. Ibid, p. 220.

Wittgenstein rejects it as "the philosophy of psychology."⁵³
 Once epistemology as analysis of understanding is ruled
 out, some other thesis about thought is required. Accord-
 ing to Wittgenstein "The thought is the significant propo-
 sition."⁵⁴ And "The totality of propositions is the lan-
 guage."⁵⁵ It means what is required is not the analysis of
 the understanding or reason but that of language. Wittgens-
 tein replaced understanding or reason by language. And
 with this alteration philosophy becomes 'critique of
 language' (T 4.0031) instead of 'critique of reason'.

Kant's central problem was to show the a priori
 ingredients of theoretic knowledge and thereby to limit
 its range. This dichotomy of 'knowable' and 'unknowable'
 appears as a duality of 'sayable' and 'unsayable' in the
 Tractatus. Wittgenstein says in the Preface to the Trac-
 tatus :

Its whole meaning could be summed up somewhat as
 follows : what can be said at all can be said
 clearly; and whereof one cannot speak thereof one
 must be silent.

The book will, therefore, draw a limit to
 thinking, or rather -- not to thinking, but to the
 expression of thoughts;

The limit can, therefore, only be drawn in
 language and what lies on the other side of the
 limit will be simply nonsense.⁵⁶

53. T 4.1121 (2)

54. T 4

55. T 4.001

56. T p. 27.

So he says that "The limits of my language mean the limits
of my world." ⁸⁷ This is the tractarian form of the Trans-
cendental Deduction. The limits of theoretical reason
are constituted not by the categories of the understanding
but forms of language.

CHAPTER - II

A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE TRACTATUS LOGICO-PHILOSOPHICUS

1. The Tractatus is, no doubt, a difficult work. Alexander Maslow writes : "I feel that, if one could only, to use a metaphor, strike the right key from the beginning one could go on without much trouble into the rest of this syncopated philosophical composition."¹ But this view seems to be incorrect. Each sentence of the Tractatus is difficult, and every word demands a careful study. Those who read the Tractatus with the expectation of finding a single key that would unlock the mysterious book are baffled and frustrated. The difficulty is because of both style and thought and imagery.

First, about the difficulty of style. The Tractatus is a collection of crisp, short, aphoristic sentences. They present the intended thought in extremely compressed form. At first sight it gives the impression of scattered utterances put together obscurely. The artificial system of numbering is of little help. However, it should not be inferred from this that the Tractatus is unsystematic or a patch work. If the reader is not baffled by the apparent lack of system, and

1. Maslow, A., A Study In Wittgenstein's Tractatus,

exercises his own mind, he can perceive the inner relationship existing among the scattered sentences. The internal relations and ultimate purpose of the argument are clear enough. Only it requires the reader's active effort to detect it. And the system of numbering, though not adhered to rigorously, is a convenient means of understanding the work.

The second difficulty of style concerns the presentation of the arguments. Wittgenstein does not state clearly the processes and arguments that lie behind his theses. Only the final results are given. Max Black is right when he says -- "Of strict argument; there is very little in the book but his main arguments are presented dogmatically." It does not mean that Wittgenstein was a dogmatic metaphysician. There are strong arguments behind the pithy pronouncements of the *Tractatus*. Some of them can be traced in the 'Notes on Logic', prepared for Russell in September, 1913, the 'Notes' dictated to Moore in April, 1914, the letters sent to Russell between June, 1912 and November, 1921, the Notebooks (1914-16), and from the reports of those who had personal conversations with Wittgenstein. Certain points are made explicit in Wittgenstein's criticism of the *Tractatus* in his own investigations. But the *Tractatus* is like a passage with blank spaces to be filled up on the basis of what is given. The reader has to find out the missing arguments.

Next, about the difficulties concerning the content of the Tractatus. First of all Wittgenstein has used some ordinary terms, namely, 'world', 'fact', 'sense', 'tautology' etc., in special technical senses in a way that eludes the grasp of even experts. Secondly, though Wittgenstein is discussing the problems raised by Frege and Russell, he is gifted with remarkable ability to look at them from entirely new perspectives. He can easily detect difficulties about things which others have taken for granted. Like Moore, he raises new questions and makes new points about the apparently familiar field of facts. That is why he says in the Preface : "The book will perhaps only be understood by those who have themselves already thought the thoughts which are expressed in it -- or similar thoughts."³

These points may explain well why the Tractatus was widely misunderstood. In the opinion of Wittgenstein himself it was misunderstood by Russell, Moore, Frege and Ramsey, who are supposed to be experts in the field of investigation he is concerned with. Those who belong to the other camp have made criticisms which are wide of the mark. I may mention the names of Dr. Weinberg (Examination of Logical Positivism), Errol H. Harris (Nature Mind and Modern Science), G.H.G. Moore (Retreat from Truth), R. Marshard (Reason and Experience), etc.

Similarly the positivists as Schlick, Carnap, Popper, Maslow etc., have read the Tractatus from a point too far removed from the work itself to be very satisfactory. They have interpreted the Tractatus as a treatise on Logical Positivism. What is surprising is the fact that the misunderstanding of certain key-points still prevails. In this situation a thorough study of the Tractatus is still needed.

It is said that the Tractatus is superseded by Wittgenstein's posthumous works. Wittgenstein himself has described the type of philosophic thinking as given in the Tractatus as superstition. But the following points make the study of the Tractatus relevant even today :

There are some philosophers who find certain doctrines of the Tractatus to be correct even now. Stepius writes in the first chapter of his illuminating book : "But the Tractatus is also interesting in itself-- I share the often-expressed feeling that Wittgenstein overshoots the mark when in his later work he criticises his earlier thought."⁴ Similarly, we read in the introductory remarks of Sellars' paper "Naming And Saying" : The essay adopts the Tractarian view that configurations of objects are expressed by configurations of names. Two alternatives are considered : The objects in atomic facts are (1) without exception particulars; (2) one or more particulars plus a universal (Gustav

4. Stepius, E., Wittgenstein's Tractatus, p. 16.

Porghmann). It is argued that (1) is both Wittgenstein's view in the *Tractatus* and correct.⁵

Secondly, the *Tractatus* occupies an important place in the history of twentieth century philosophy. The doctrines expressed in the *Tractatus* stimulated the development of both Logical Atomism and Logical Positivism. It is not possible to understand these movements without some knowledge of the *Tractatus*.

Thirdly, according to Wittgenstein himself a thorough grasp of the *Tractatus* would enable the reader to understand his later works. He says in the Preface to the *Investigations* : "Four years ago I had occasion to re-read my first book (the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*) and to explain its ideas to some-one. It suddenly seemed to me that I should publish these old thoughts and the new ones together: that the latter could be seen in the right light only by contrast with and against the background of my old way of thinking."⁶

Finally, Wittgenstein never considered the *Tractatus* to be entirely wrong. The view that there are two Wittgensteins who have nothing in common is certainly misleading and false. It rests on the erroneous interpretation that

5. Sellars' #., "Naming And Saying", *Philosophy of Science*, Vol. XIII, January, 1938, p. 7.

6. PI, p. 2.

7. "Wittgenstein used to say that the *Tractatus* was not all wrong; it was not like a bag of junk professing to be a clock, but like a clock that did not tell you the right time." Anscombe, *An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus*, p. 76.

the earlier Wittgenstein is concerned with the possibility and conditions of the ideal language, while the later Wittgenstein is contented with the investigations of ordinary language. I shall try to show in the present dissertation that even in the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein starts with the logical validity of ordinary language. What is wrong here is the assumption (which he terms in the *Philosophical Investigations* as a superstition) that the descriptive language functions in only one way, i.e., by picturing facts. Held captive by this assumption he tried to give the perspicuous forms of the significant language. In his later writings he realised that neither language functions in any definite way, nor, words have any definite, fixed meaning. So far as ordinary language is concerned, he accepted its logical validity even in the *Tractatus*, though he went wrong about how it functions. He rectified this mistake in his later works. Hence the *Tractatus* cannot be regarded to be wholly wrong.

These points compel us to examine the various doctrines of the *Tractatus*. But the plan of the present work confines the area of my investigations. I intend to consider only those theses that have influenced the further development of philosophical thinking. They are primarily, the concept of meaning, the function of language, and the clarification of the philosophical problems. There are many other problems closely related to those listed above, but as I pointed out

they are not essential for our purpose.

As to the method of this chapter we must note the following points. The *Tractatus* is a web in which every thesis is connected with others. The *Tractatus* started with a view to solve certain problems raised by the studies of Frege and Russell, in the field of mathematical logic. But soon Wittgenstein was drawn to investigate how descriptive languages function. This led him finally to develop the concept of an adequate symbolism and other technical views concerning logic and language. But this is only one side of the picture. The other side reveals his interest in the relation of thought or language to reality. This was perhaps his central theme; and determined the beginning of the 'linguistic turn' in contemporary philosophy.

Wittgenstein's conception of language, his search for the essence of language through ideography or ideal language, is essentially related to certain ontological issues, i.e., the structure of the world. His conception of the world is determined by his views about language. He was convinced that the essence of language mirrors the essential structure of the world. Objects and facts are, on his view of language, only ontological counterparts of names and propositions. They are requirements of a significant language. But it would be misleading to jump from this to the conclusion that the relationship between language and reality is one way. As a matter of fact both semantics and

ontology interact upon each other and their relationship is
 "too complex to be reduced to a simple formula;"⁸

It is perhaps true that the discussion of ontology
 with which the book opens was the "last part to be composed,"⁹
 and that the "real starting-point is a theory of meaning, not
 a directly intuited ontology."¹⁰ But seeing the complexity
 of their interaction, the best place to begin would be where
 Wittgenstein himself begins, i.e., with the world, fact and
 object. These topics are important for us only to the extent
 to which they illuminate Wittgenstein's conception of lan-
 guage.

II. Having passed through the vestibule of the Trac-
 tarian philosophy, let us now enter the mansion itself. In
 his analysis of the world, Wittgenstein both follows the
 tradition and also departs from it. He carries out the
 traditional task of reducing the complex into the simples.
 He received the immediate impetus from Russell, but the
 enterprise can be traced back in the philosophical utterances
 of the first western philosopher - Thales, who reduced every
 thing to water. In the relatively modern times Descartes,
 Leibnitz, Locke and Hume have continued the same programme.

8. Black, H., A Companion to Wittgenstein's Tractatus,
 p. 8.

9. Ibid, p. 27.

10. Passmore, J., A Hundred Years of Philosophy,
 p. 358.

Leibniz finds everything to be an aggregate of simples i.e., monads. And Locke thought that all ideas are either simples or reducible to simple ideas. Wittgenstein continues this tradition in the sense that in his opinion the world is divisible into simple constituents. But he departs from the tradition significantly and it is this attempt that gives originality and importance to his work. He showed that the constituents that make up the world are neither 'simple things' nor 'simple ideas', but 'atomic facts'. He declares in 1.1, "The world is the totality of facts, not of things." Our immediate task is to explain this change. Wittgenstein does not explain himself why this is so. But it is easy to find out the main points that led him to formulate this view.

The commonsense view holds the world to be the totality of things. Wittgenstein replaces things by facts. Is he annihilating the existence of things? Not the least. On the contrary, he holds objects to be the substance of the world. Objects form the substance of the world, but they are not the primary units into which the world divides. Why? There are, I think, two reasons behind this change : first, ontological, and second, linguistic.

The main ontological consideration that led Wittgenstein to modify the traditional doctrine is his belief (which is rooted in his logical considerations) that objects, though "make up the substance of the world", (T 2.021), yet are such that they cannot exist apart from facts. The

following lines from the *Tractatus* make this point obvious :

It is essential to a thing that it can be a constituent part of an atomic fact. 2.011

Just as we cannot think of spatial objects at all apart from space, or temporal objects apart from time, so we cannot think of any object apart from the possibility of its connection with other things. 2.0121(4).

If I can think of an object in the context of an atomic fact, I cannot think of it apart from the possibility of this context. 2.0121(5).

If I know an object, then I also know all the possibilities of its occurrence in atomic facts. 2.0122(1)

Everything is, as it were, in a space of possible atomic facts. I can think of this space as empty, but not of the thing without the space. 2.013.

These remarks clearly show that on Wittgenstein's theory objects cannot exist apart from the facts. But, it may be said that Wittgenstein contradicts himself in 2.024, where he says that "substance is what exists independently of what is the case." The objection is based on a misunderstanding. It assumes that an object can occur only in one fact. Had it been so, it would have been really contradictory, first, to say that an object cannot exist apart from the facts, and then, to assert that it is independent of what is the case. But when Wittgenstein says that a substance is independent of what is the case, what he really means is simply this, that a particular object is independent of a particular fact in which it occurs. An object has the possibility of occurring in many facts. It is not necessarily

tied down to a particular fact. Thus an object is independent of particular facts, but it must exist in some fact. Wittgenstein has already explained this point in T 2.0123 : "The thing is independent, in so far as it can occur in all possible circumstances, but this form of independence is a form of connection with the atomic fact, a form of dependence. (It is impossible for words to occur in two different ways, alone and in the proposition)." We can now understand why for Wittgenstein the world divides into facts and not into things. It is only facts that can exist of themselves, independently of anything else. No doubt they are analysable into objects, but objects do not exist alone. They cannot. Wittgenstein, therefore, concludes that the primary units which make up the world are facts, not things.

The second ontological point that makes Wittgenstein's view compelling, is the fact, that the world is not completely described by listing the objects. To know the world one must know the actual arrangements of the objects. Moreover, as George Pitcher¹¹ and James Griffin¹² have shown, out of the same number of objects many possible worlds may be imagined. The objects will be common both to the actual and the many imagined worlds. The list of objects would be identical for all possible worlds, so nothing definite could

11. Pitcher, G., The Philosophy of Wittgenstein, p.

19.

12. Griffin, J., Wittgenstein's Logical Atomism,

p. 21.

be given by it about our actual world. It is, therefore, facts, not objects that determine and describe our actual world.

The third factor in favour of this theory is that objects determine only the form and not any material property. Material properties are formed only by the configurations of objects.¹³ The real world is the world of flesh and blood, not mere skeleton of simple objects and their forms.

Lastly, the list of simple, indestructible, unalterable, permanent objects cannot explain the changing history of the world. The world is not a fixed and static catalogue of things.

Taking up the linguistic considerations, almost all the philosophers analyse the basic constituents of the world in their own favourite ways. But while the previous philosophers based their analysis on the examination of things and thing-like stuffs (eg. ideas); Wittgenstein made his way through language. In their ordinary discourse the English-speaking people use the term 'fact' in a variety of ways. The same practice is adopted by the Germans about the use of the term 'Tatsache'. Some of the uses are given here :

- (a) It is a fact that bears exist.
- (b) The fact is that bears exist.

(c) Bears exist : that is a fact.

(d) Some facts about the growth of population are alarming.

These statements and others using 'fact', suggest that facts are there in the world to be asserted, disputed, denied, discussed, stated, believed and so on. These and similar expressions might have led Wittgenstein to suppose that the term 'fact' denotes a kind of ontological entity. But, the ordinary use in itself is not sufficient to break with the tradition. Granted that the term 'fact' denotes some ontological entities, it does not follow from this that facts are the only possible constituents of the world. The ordinary uses of the term 'fact' do not prevent us from holding the doctrine that the world is a totality of both things and facts.

But the ordinary uses of the term 'fact' alongwith Wittgenstein's notions of meaning and truth, inevitably lead him to the view that the world is the totality of facts, and not of things. Wittgenstein believes that no statement can be true in itself. It must be tied down to reality. Now what corresponds to a statement is not a thing, but a fact. Things can only be named. What is stated, asserted, denied, or described is a fact. Whatever a fact may be, it is not a thing.

A fundamental question that has always troubled the logicians and philosophers is : what is the primary unit of a significant language? For a long time it was accepted,

specially by the English empiricists, that the primary unit of the language is a term. A proposition, they thought, is a combination of terms which are meaningful in themselves. Idealist logicians reacted against this view strongly. The strongest supporter of the idealist doctrine of judgment is F.H. Bradley whose position, we have already explained in the first chapter. Wittgenstein continues Bradley's tradition. He maintains in the *Tractatus* that names have no meaning unless used in a proposition. He says : "Only the proposition has sense; only in the context of a proposition has a name meaning." T 3.3. Hence for Wittgenstein, as for Bradley, the primary unit of language is a proposition and not a name. Propositions are the only vessels of sense. Names can only name an object, they can make no assertions about objects. But they can do even this (naming) only when they are used in a proposition.

Now, thought or language is for Wittgenstein the totality of significant propositions. He writes :

The thought is the significant proposition. T 4.
The totality of propositions is the language. T 4.001.

A proposition is simply the description of a fact.
T 4.023(3).

To understand a proposition means to know what is the case, if it is true. T 4.024(1).

A proposition presents the existence and non-existence of atomic facts. T 4.1

These statements clearly point out that only propositions can convey sense, and the sense of a proposition is the

state of affairs represented by it. It means that it is the essential requirement of a significant language that there be states of affairs (actual or possible). In the absence of the states of affairs, language will fail to convey any sense. It will simply go lame. Similarly, if a proposition is to be true, there must be actual states of affairs i.e. facts. It means that, for Wittgenstein, atomic facts are necessary for the sense and truth of language, i.e., language is possible only if there are facts. It is precisely in this sense that the world is said to be the totality of facts, and not of things.

In sum, both ontological and linguistic considerations lead Wittgenstein to divide the world into facts, instead of things. This view, we have seen, is not an unqualified rejection of the common-sense belief which holds the world to be the totality of things. It is simply a modification, a new vision of the world. But it is a vision necessitated by Wittgenstein's logical investigations about the nature of objects, sense and truth.

But can Wittgenstein's doctrine, in any way, be justified? What exactly is a fact? Some aspects of these questions have¹⁴¹⁵ been ably discussed by eminent philosophers as Moore, Strawson¹⁶ and Austin. I can not participate in this controversy here but a summary treatment would enable us to have a better understanding

14. Moore G.E. 'Being, Fact And Existence' included in *Some Main Problems of Philosophy*, 2nd impression, pp. 283-306.

15. Strawson, P.F., *Truth (Symposium)*, *PAS (Suppl.)*, 24, (1950), 129-58.

16. Austin, J.L., (1) 'Truth' (Symposium), *PAS (Suppl.)*, 24 (1950), repr. in *Philosophical papers*, pp. 85-101.

of Wittgenstein's handling of the whole affair.

Wittgenstein seems to use 'fact' in at least one of the ways in which this word is used in ordinary language, i.e., to denote whatever is expressed by a true statement. It means, we should, first, look at certain 'fact' -- locations -- certain uses of 'fact' in ordinary language. This method is necessary, if we have to avoid the errors of approaching problems cap and categories in hand. But I wish to exhibit only a few of the more obvious candidates.

The most frequent use of 'fact' is to emphasise certain assertions. In such statements as 'It is a fact that bears exist', the term 'fact' is used to emphasise the assertion that bears exist. The other prevalent use of 'fact' in ordinary language is to express the truth of a statement. It is used as equivalent to 'really' and 'truly'. 'Factual' is another word to express the same thing. These uses express something settled, accepted, undoubted unquestionable, undisputed, something opposed to mere opinion or rumour. Generally these uses are made in the situations of doubt, hesitation, suspicion and surprise.

In all such uses the term 'fact' is expendable and replaceable by other equivalent words. It will be wrong to say that in these statements 'fact' is used to denote or to refer to some objective reality. Two other words can be mentioned which, more or less, function in the similar fashion. We generally say, 'The thing is that x' and 'The point is that x'. Now it will be completely misleading to say that 'x' denotes or stands for

either something or some point. It is still absurd to say that 'thing' and 'point' refer to some objective reality. They are only linguistic devices. Similarly in the uses we have just considered the term 'fact' is used as a linguistic device, and does not denote any objective reality. Moreover, it is not an indispensable expression.

But there are some other uses of the term 'fact' which seem to differ ^{from} the uses we have examined, e.g., 'the fact of increasing population is alarming'. Here, too, the term 'fact' can be eliminated. We can say, 'it is alarming that population is increasing'. But here the elimination of 'fact' is not so easy or direct. According to Strawson, even in a general statement the term 'fact' is used in a compendious way to express particular assertions of a class.¹⁷

However, philosophers have interpreted the term 'fact' as standing for the 'so and so' or denoting some objective entities. It may be only philosophical use, though this suggestion has been rejected by Austin.¹⁸ He says that " 'fact' was in origin a name for 'something in the world'"¹⁹ He further contends that "Any connection between 'fact' and 'knowledge' and still more between 'fact' and 'truth' (in particular the use of 'a fact' as equivalent to 'a truth'), is a derivative

17. Strawson, P.F., 'Truth' (Symposium) *PAF*, 24, 1960.

18. Austin, J.L., 'Unfair to Facts' *Philosophical Papers*, p. 112.

19. *Ibid*, p. 112.

and comparatively late connection."²⁰ Finally, he says, "The expression 'fact that' is later still, and was introduced as a grammatical convenience, because of the already existing meaning of 'fact'. To explain the meaning of 'fact' in terms of the expression 'fact that' is to invert the real order of things"²¹

On the other hand Strawson's contention is that facts are not anything genuinely-in-the-world, but pseudo entities. The genuine entities that are in the world are things, persons and events. He says : "The only plausible candidate for the position of what (in the world) makes the statement true is the fact it states; but the fact it states is not something in the world."²² "If we read "world" (a sadly corrupted word) as "heavens and earths", talk of facts, situations and state of affairs as "included in" or "parts of" the world is, obviously, metaphorical. The world is the totality of things not of facts."²³

Now we are in a better position to evaluate Wittgenstein's contribution to this controversial topic. There is no evidence either in the Notebooks or in the Tractatus that may warrant us to say that Wittgenstein formulated his views by following the ordinary usage of 'fact'. His analysis is deeply coloured with a priori linguistic and extra-linguistic considerations.

20. Ibid, p. 112.

21. Ibid, p. 112.

22. Strawson, P.F., Truth, (Symposium) PAS, Suppl., 24, 1950, p. 135.

23. Ibid, p. 139.

In his use, 'fact' is not expendable, as it is not merely a linguistic device. 'Fact', in the opinion of Wittgenstein is something extra-linguistic which makes linguistic propositions true. He arrives at this conception by his logical analysis of language. The main point, as I have already indicated, is that the intelligible world, the universe of discourse, consists of statements, not of names. Moreover, names are mere signs, lifeless, when not used in a statement. Thus the primary unit of significant language is a statement, and consequently the primary unit of reality is that which corresponds to the true statement, namely, a fact. Let us now turn to Wittgenstein's conception of fact and thing.

III - In order to understand Wittgenstein's doctrines about the world, fact and object the following points must be grasped clearly. First, Wittgenstein does not use the terms 'fact' and 'object' in the ordinary sense. Second, he did not arrive at his conclusions by any empirical analysis of either experience or language. He approached the problem, rather, from an a priori analysis of language. His view seems to be that the possibility of a significant language presupposes the possibility of atomic facts and objects. Their existence is demanded by certain considerations of language. They are requirements of meaning.

24

What, according to Wittgenstein, is an atomic fact?

24. A few words about the translation of Der Sachverhalt is very much in need. Ogden Anscombe and Russell translate it as 'atomic fact'. However, this translation is controversial. Pears and Mc Guinness

contd. to next page...

The important points about fact are given in 1's and 2's.

The theses which the 1's intend to propound are : the world is all that is the case and the world is the totality of facts not of things. The world divides, ultimately, into unit-facts, facts which are simple or atomic (Sachverhalte). In the 2's Wittgenstein discusses atomic facts or states of affairs, how they are formed, their structure and form, and their existence and non-existence.

Obviously our first concern is to know what an atomic fact is, and how it is formed. As I said earlier, an atomic fact is the unit-fact, the existing state of affairs, which is the primary constituent of the world. The complex situations (the complex facts) must break up ultimately into atomic facts.

(footnote continued from the previous page)

translate it as 'state of affairs'. In the edition of Steiner "a Sachverhalt is something that could possibly be the case, a Tatsache something that is really the case." (p. 31). The other word of the same category is Sachlage. Fears and McQuinness translate it as 'situation' (at 2.0122) Ogden has both 'fact' (at 2.11) and 'state of affairs' (at 2.0121, 2.014, 2.202 and elsewhere). There is no difficulty with Tatsache which everyone accepts as 'fact', but Sachverhalt and Sachlage are really troublesome. The important point, however, is that a Sachverhalt is simple or atomic while a Sachlage need not be so.

I intend to use both 'atomic fact' and 'state of affairs' since an existing state of affairs is definitely an atomic fact. Moreover, as Miss Anscombe points out (see p. 30, n1) Wittgenstein does speak of non-existent Sachverhalte (2.06) and in German a "possible fact" (mögliche Tatsache) would be something that is perhaps a fact. That is to say, 'non-existent fact' and 'possible fact' may be absurd in their ordinary English usage, but Wittgenstein does use those phrases. However, if exactness of terminology is needed, 'atomic fact' should be used for only 'actual simple state of affairs.'

They represent the ultimate limit of analysis. If there is a complex situation, it must consist of atomic facts. Atomic facts cannot be divided into simpler facts. They are the facts which have no parts which can be simpler facts. It is these unit facts into which the world ultimately divides (T 2.04). They enjoy the proud privilege of being the primary stuff of the world. But, before we proceed further, we must answer a pertinent question : why should there be atomic facts? Wittgenstein says that an atomic fact is what a proposition states, if it is true. The sense of a proposition is the state of affairs which it represents. If the state of affairs represented by the proposition is actual, it is true. It means, in order to discover whether a proposition is true or false we must compare it with reality. We may refer to T 2.201, 2.202, 2.203, 2.21, 2.221, 2.222, 2.223, 2.224, 2.225, 4.21 on this score. It means that if there are true statements, there must be atomic facts. In the absence of atomic facts, we cannot determine the truth-value of any proposition. Without facts we could have no language. A language does not consist of mere names. Names must be combined in elementary propositions. Atomic facts are simply ontological counterparts of the elementary propositions. Atomic facts are, then, on this interpretation, demands of a significant language.

But atomic facts are not simple in the sense that they cannot be analysed further. No doubt, they cannot be analysed into facts, but they are analysed into objects (Gegenständen) -- entities (Sachen), things (Dingen). An atomic fact is the

combination of objects (T 2.01). In the atomic fact objects hang one in another, like the links of a chain (T 2.03). In the atomic fact the objects are combined in a definite way (T 2.031). It is obvious from these assertions that Wittgenstein does not use 'fact' as it is ordinarily used. In the ordinary language, even when 'fact' is used for phenomena, events, circumstances, situations, occurrences, happenings, states of affairs, they are not conceived as 'combinations of things'. On Wittgenstein's technical use, a simple state of affairs (Sachverhalt) is a combination of objects in a definite way. This sense certainly departs from the ordinary one. For Wittgenstein the atomic facts, the ultimate building blocks of the world are combinations of things (Dingen). But the atomic fact is not simply a plurality of particulars, a jumble of things, a disorderly collection of entities or a mere aggregate of objects. It is a configuration (Konfiguration) (T 2.0272). In it the objects are combined in a definite way (T 2.031). "The way in which objects hang together (Zusammenhängen) in the atomic fact (Sachverhalt) is", according to Wittgenstein, "The structure (die Struktur) of the atomic fact" T 2.032. He says in 2.033; "The form (die form) is the possibility (Möglichkeit) of the structure." It means the structure is the configuration of the objects in the atomic fact, and the possibility of this configuration is its form.

In this consideration of form Wittgenstein seems to be "influenced by the analogy of a spatial arrangement of a set of material bodies." ²⁵ Another important feature of atomic facts

²⁵ Black, N., A Companion to Wittgenstein's Tractatus, p. 67.

is their independence. Wittgenstein states at 2.061-2 : states of affairs are independent of one another. From the existence or non-existence of one state of affairs it is impossible to infer the existence or non-existence of another." Similarly he says in 1.21 "Anyone can either be the case or not be the case, and everything else remain the same." He elaborates the same point while talking of inference :

From an elementary proposition no other can be inferred T 5.134.

In no way can an inference be made from the existence of one state of affairs to the existence of another entirely different from it. T 5.135.

There is no causal nexus which justifies such an inference. T 5.136.

The events of the future cannot be inferred from those of the present. T 5.1361.

The mutual independence of atomic facts follows from their simplicity or atomicity. As Stenius says, "Whether or not the descriptive content of what is usually called a (logically) compound sentence is the case, is, of course, not independent of the truth or falsehood of, for instance, its components -- that is, of whether the descriptive contents of the components are or are not the case."²⁶ By the 'descriptive content' Stenius means the 'state of affairs' denoted by the proposition. To explain it more clearly, suppose there are two atomic facts : 'a-b-c' and

26. Stenius, E., Wittgenstein's Tractatus, p. 34.

'e-f-g'. By combining them we get the logical product :
 'a-b-c, e-f-g'. Now this product is not logically independent. It could not exist if either 'a-b-c' or 'e-f-g' did not exist. It is obvious that a complex cannot be independent. When states of affairs are said to be independent, what Wittgenstein means is, that they are simple.

We have to consider next, the relation of the atomic facts to the world and reality. Wittgenstein seems to make a distinction between the world (Welt) and reality (Wirklichkeit). He says :

The facts in the logical space are the world.
 T 1.13

The world divides into facts. T 1.2

The totality of existent atomic facts is the world.
 T 2.04

Thus the world is identified with the totality of existent atomic facts. It is these existent atomic facts, which constitute the world, which the world divides into. But what is reality (Wirklichkeit)? Wittgenstein says at T 2.06 (1) : "The existence and non-existence of atomic facts is the reality." It means (as it appears at first sight), the reality is wider than the world and includes more than the positive (existent) facts. It includes negative facts also.

Let us see, first, what a negative fact is. It may be suggested that a negative fact is, like the positive facts, a configuration of objects, with a slight difference

that it also includes an object corresponding to the term 'not'. But Wittgenstein cannot accept this suggestion. He says at T 4.0021 that "... the sign "~" corresponds to nothing in reality". What, then, is a negative fact? Wittgenstein himself provides the clue. He says at T 2.06 (2). "The existence of atomic facts we also call a positive fact, their non-existence a negative fact." A negative fact is a state of affairs (Sachverhalt) that does not exist. The world, then, includes all the positive atomic facts, i.e. all the existing states of affairs. It excludes the non-existent facts. Reality is wider, and comprises all the positive and negative facts.

But this interpretation faces a trouble at T 2.063, where Wittgenstein says, that the sum-total of reality is the world. This assertion eliminates even a slight possibility that reality might be wider than the world. Reality and world are evidently equated. It means that the world, as the sum-total of reality, includes both positive and negative facts. He seems to maintain at the same time that (a) the world is the totality of only existent atomic facts, (b) reality includes both positive and negative facts, and (c) reality and world are equivalent. How to get out of this trouble? James Griffin suggests a way out by pointing that, "..... negative facts are such that once we have a set of positive facts we have a set of negative facts, as it were, automatically. In this sense we can speak of

negative facts being inseparable from positive facts. Thus, when Wittgenstein says that the world is the sum of positive facts, this may be taken to mean that the world is completely constituted by existent states of affairs. When he says that the world includes both positive and negative facts, this may be taken to refer to their inseparability; with a set of positive facts comes a set of negative facts.²⁷ Wittgenstein himself gives a clue for this reconciliation. He says at T 2.05 : "The totality of existent atomic facts also determines which atomic facts do not exist." He has already said at T 1.13, "For the totality of facts determines both what is the case, and also all that is not the case." It means that the world is the totality of positive facts. But as the totality of positive facts determines all the negative facts, there is no absurdity in saying that the world is the sum-total of reality.

I have been discussing till now the nature of atomic facts ignoring objects almost completely. It may give the impression that the real difficulty lies with the facts, while objects are quite innocent. This, however, is contrary to the truth. As I shall attempt to show, now, it is the concept of object that baffles every attempt to understand the Tractarian philosophy.

²⁷ Griffin, J., Wittgenstein's Logical Atomism, p. 38.

The first important thing that Wittgenstein says about objects is that they are constituents of atomic facts. An atomic fact is a combination of objects (T 2.01). It is essential to a thing that it can be a constituent part of an atomic fact (T 2.011). Two conclusions follow from these remarks :

First, objects and facts belong to different categories. As we have seen above, the world divides into facts, and not into things. Facts are combinations of things. Facts imply structure and, therefore, are complexes. Objects, on the other hand, lack structures and are, for that reason, simples.

Secondly, and this is increasingly more important, objects are essentially, constituents of atomic facts, i.e., it is logically impossible for an object not to occur in the atomic facts as their constituent parts. It simply cannot not occur in this or that fact. It cannot exist in isolation. Of course a thing is independent of a particular fact, but it must occur in some fact. Thus its independence is, paradoxically enough, a form of dependence (T 2.0122). To maintain this thesis Wittgenstein offers following arguments :

The first argument rests on his conception of logic. He says, "In logic nothing is accidental : if a thing can occur in an atomic fact, the possibility of that atomic

fact must already be prejudged in the thing." (T 2.012). Commenting on this statement he says at T 2.0121(4) "It would, so to speak, appear as an accident, when to a thing that could exist alone on its own account, subsequently a state of affairs could be made to fit." The point is, that if an object could exist alone, independently of all the facts it subsequently occurs in, it would be merely accidental for it to be part of these facts. But there is no such possibility, because it is the objects that constitute these facts.

Secondly, in order to know an object I must know all its possible occurrences in atomic facts (T 2.0123). He says that every such possibility must lie in the nature of the object. A new possibility cannot be found. He says at T 2.01231, "In order to know an object, I must know not its external but all its internal qualities." Then he says at T 2.0141, "The possibility of its occurrence in atomic facts is the form of the object." It means the object is inconceivable without its internal form or formal property. And its internal form is the possibility of its occurrence in atomic facts. This is why objects contain the possibility of all states of affairs (T 2.014). Briefly speaking, if the internal form is essential to the object, and its internal form is the possibility of its occurrence in the possible atomic facts, then it cannot exist on its own account independently of the facts.

Thirdly, Wittgenstein puts the inseparability of

object and atomic fact in the strikingly Kantian language, "Just as we cannot think of spatial objects at all apart from space, or temporal objects apart from time, so we cannot think of any object apart from the possibility of its connection with other things. If I can think of an object in the context of an atomic fact, I cannot think of it apart from the possibility of this context." T 2.0121 (d-e). It means, the possibility of occurrence in the possible facts, is the essential condition of an object's existence, just as space and time are necessary conditions of spatial and temporal objects. The central point is, that if an object occurs in some facts, then it is not just an accident that it happens to be ^{its} constituent. It must occur in it.

The next important characteristic of the object is given at T 2.02 : "The object is simple (einfach)". Immediately at T 2.0201 Wittgenstein says, "Every statement about complexes can be analysed into a statement about their constituent parts, and into those propositions which completely describe the complexes."

Obviously, Wittgenstein connects the simplicity of objects with the possibility of analysis. The analysis takes us to simples. The T 3.25 tells us that a fully analysed proposition consists of only names. An elementary proposition, which is the limit reached by analysis, is one with names in some configuration. If a proposition contains only

primitive signs, then it is fully analysed. If it contains a descriptive term, it is not fully analysed. He says in T 4.22(1), "It is obvious that in the analysis of propositions we must come to elementary propositions, which consist of names in immediate combination." A name, in Wittgenstein's technical sense, can mean only an object -- the simple. A name means an object (T 3.203). It amounts to this : there must be simples if the analysis is to terminate somewhere. The meaning of the unanalysed proposition depends on the meaning of the analysed propositions. And the meaning of the fully analysed proposition depends on the meanings of the terms (names) it contains. But the meaning of a names is the object it refers to. If the thing, a term refers to, is complex, the term is only a description of it, and not a name. It may look like a name in the ordinary speech, but it is really an implicit description and needs further analysis. The analysis comes to an end if, and only if, the decomposable simples are exhibited by it. It is these simples which Wittgenstein describes as objects. Wittgenstein makes this point clear in his *Philosophical Investigations*. Explaining why he thought in the *Tractatus* that there must be simples, he says :

A name signifies only what is an element of reality. What cannot be destroyed; what remains the same in all changes." -- But what is that? -- why, it swam before our minds as we said the sentence! This was the very expression of a quite particular image : of a particular picture which we want to use. For certainly experience does not show us these elements. We see component parts of something composite (of a chair, for instance). We say that the back is part

of the chair, but is in turn itself composed of several bits of wood; while a log is a simple component part. We also see a whole which changes (is destroyed) while its component parts remain unchanged. These are the materials from which we construct that picture of reality. PI, Sec. 39.

This passage is very important, because it explains clearly how the earlier Wittgenstein fell victim to the illusion that there must be simples, and, what he meant by analysis and simple. Further discussion of the nature of simples depends on what precisely they are taken to mean, and the criterion of simplicity. To this we shall come after discussing two other characteristics of objects.

The third point is intimately related to the previous one. It may be looked at as a proof of the second point (viz., that objects are simple), and it is only for the sake of convenience that I intend to give it a separate treatment. This point, as Wittgenstein puts in T 2.021, is : "Objects form the substance of the world. Therefore, they cannot be compound." Though the world divides into facts, yet it is objects which form the substance of the world. As they are substance of the world, they must be simple. But why should there be substances? Wittgenstein seems to offer the following argument :

If the world had no substance, then whether a proposition had sense would depend on whether another proposition was true. T 2.0211.

It would then be impossible to form a picture of the world (true or false)* T 2.0212.

The world must have substances because, (a) if the world had

no substance, then whether a proposition had sense would depend on whether another proposition was true; (b) and if this be so, then it would be impossible to form a picture of the world, true or false; (c) but we do form a picture of the world which proves the existence of the substances. We have seen already, while discussing the simplicity of objects, that the sense of an unanalysed proposition depends upon the sense of its fully analysed propositions. The sense of a fully analysed proposition is independent of other propositions, because it contains only names which directly refer to objects. Suppose there is a proposition A. It can be analysed into a group of propositions--B, C, D -- which in turn can be analysed into another group -- E, F, G, H, I, J, K -- and so on. Now this process of analysis will continue till the analysed propositions contain general or descriptive terms.

In this situation, if there are no substances, then there will always be analyses of analyses of analyses, and so on *ad infinitum*. Its inevitable consequence is that we cannot make even false pictures of the world. This uneasy regress can be avoided, if, and only if, there are substances. Unless names have bearers, there is no possibility of definite sense. There will be only descriptions. And the sense of one description will depend on the truth of some other description, which in its turn will depend on still another proposition being true, and the process is unending.

It means the names must be nailed to reality. There must be substances.

Lastly, Wittgenstein says that objects are unalterable and subsistent. Because objects are fixed or unalterable, they are common to all possible worlds (T 2.022 and 2.023). An imagined world is, in his opinion, formed by re-arranging the existent substances. The objects are fixed in another important sense. He says in T 2.0271, "Objects are what is unalterable and subsistent; their configuration is what is changing and unstable." It means, what changes is only configuration or complex, while the object being simple is unalterable or fixed. Change applies only to the states of affairs, not to their constituent parts. When the objects are combined in a particular way, a definite fact comes into existence. It may also go out of existence. But the objects remain unaffected. It is only the complex that is composed or decomposed. The object, being simple, does not change.

But Wittgenstein does not explain fully what he means by saying that objects are unalterable and subsistent. Evidently, he means that names refer to objects which cannot be destroyed and remain the same in all changes. ²⁸ But it does not help much. It amounts to this that objects remain fixed,

while their configurations change. Not only this, they remain ~~same~~ even in the imaginary states of affairs. They subsist even in imagination. But can something more be said about them? Do they endure even in time? Are they immortal? The answer depends on what the objects are taken to be. This takes us to the crux of the problem, which I have been so far postponing. What are objects? Are they universals, or properties and relations, or particulars or all of these? We know that they are simple, unalterable substances of the world which make actual and possible states of affairs. But to which of the categories, mentioned above, do they belong? The question has raised a heated discussion and the dust of the controversy has not yet settled down.

To start with, can objects be regarded as universals?
²⁹ Russell, who claims to be expounding Wittgenstein's views, says that logical atoms include both particulars and universals. Stenius holds that they include particulars, simple properties, and relations. He maintains that, "..... things and predicates are 'complementary' in that things can only enter into facts or states of affairs as bearers of predicates. A connection between individual things only, therefore, cannot form an atomic state of affairs."³⁰ In opposition to Russell and Stenius, I maintain with C.E.M.

29. Russell, B., 'The Philosophy of Logical Atomism' *Marsh Vol.*, p. 179.

30. Stenius, E., Wittgenstein's Tractatus, p. 62.

31

Anscombe, I Copi, G. Pitcher and James Griffin that objects are particulars. How to differentiate particulars and universals? As these terms are used in the traditional philosophy, particulars are supposed to be unique individuals, occupying a limited part of space and time (or time alone). It makes no sense to say that they have actual or possible instances; or that they can be predicated of anything. Universals, on the other hand, are general, have instances, and can be predicated of something. They include mainly properties (redness, circularity) and relations (being next to, greater than). What Wittgenstein says about objects can be said only for particulars. We may note the following remarks :

An atomic fact is a combination of objects (entities, things) T 2.01.

The configuration of the objects forms the atomic fact. T 2.0272.

In the atomic fact objects hang one in another like the links of a chain T 2.03.

It is certainly a good language to say that some particulars are combined or configured, and so on, but it is absurd to say that a particular is combined with a universal. However, let us discuss some stronger points which seem to decide the issue in favour of particulars.

31. Copi, I.M., 'Objects, Properties and Relations in the Tractatus' *Mind*, LVII, No. 236, (April, 1968) pp. 145-63.

The first of them is what Copi calls the symbolic evidence. Wittgenstein says :

The names are the simple symbols, I indicate them by single letters (x, y, z).

The elementary proposition I write as function of the names, in the form " $f x$ ", " $\phi(x, y)$ ", etc.

or I indicate it by the letters p, q, r .

T 4.34

So thus, symbolizes names (of objects) by individual variables rather than property or predicate variables, i.e., they are names of particulars, not of universals. Further, if universals were objects, Wittgenstein would have symbolized them by signs of such forms as ' f ' and ' ϕ ' in $f x$ and $\phi(x, y)$. But then each proposition of the forms $f x$ and $\phi(x, y)$ would, like any elementary proposition be a nexus, a concatenation, of names. But the propositions of these forms are not concatenations of names. They are, rather, functions of names. A function of names is different from the combination of names. It means, ' f ' and ' ϕ ' are not names, and universals are not objects.

Secondly, Wittgenstein writes :

We must not say, "The complex sign ' $a R b$ ' says 'a stands in relation R to b '"; but we must say, "That ' a ' stands in a certain relation to ' b ' says that $a R b$ ".

T 3.1432.

As Copi rightly interpretes : Paragraph 3.1-32 should rather be taken to forbid using the locution "The complex sign ' $a R b$ ' says, 'a stands in relation R to b '" of an adequate

notation. In ordinary language and also in the not yet adequate notation of Frege and Russell (cf. ¶ 3.385), the fact that ab is expressed in a sentence ' ab ' containing the three words ' a ', ' b ' and ' a ',³² but not in the "adequate notation" Wittgenstein recommends. It means in an adequate notation the sign ' a ' would not appear. Names for the particulars a and b appear, but no name for the relation a . The fact that a stands in relation a to b is expressed in an adequate notation by a proposition containing only two words ' a ' and ' b '. But it may be asked : if propositional signs contain no words for relations, how can they express relational facts? Wittgenstein's reply is : the relation of objects is expressed by a relation of their names.

Suppose we have to express the fact that a stands to the left of b . Here we have two objects a and b and the relation of being to the left of. In order to express this fact the two signs ' a ' and ' b ' must be arranged in a special way : first the ' a ' is written; then there is some specified distance; then immediately on the same line comes the ' b '. It is the fact that the two signs are written in this way, that represents the relation of a 's being to the left of b . It is the fact that the two signs are thus related, that depicts the fact that a stands to the left of b . Wittgenstein says, "The essential nature of the propositional sign becomes

32. Copi, I.M., 'Objects, Properties and Relations in the Tractatus', *Mind*, 1958, pp. 155-56.

very clear when we imagine it made up of spatial objects (such as tables, chairs, books) instead of written signs." (T 3.1431) The mutual spatial position of these things then expresses the sense of the proposition. (T 3.1431). This remark explains clearly that it is the spatial arrangement of the things that represents a particular fact. Any relation of objects can be expressed by the relation of their names. Evidently, no relational word is needed to express the relation of the objects. And relations are not objects.

Even in the propositional sign which contains the relational sign 'R' it is not used as the name of an object. Wittgenstein explicitly says it in 'Notes on Logic' :

Symbols are not what they seem to be. In "aRb" "R" looks like a substantive but it is not one. What symbolizes in "aRb" is that "R" occurs between "a" and "b". Hence "R" is not the indefinable in "aRb".

Notesbooks p. 99

If the sign 'R' is to be used, we can say that the fact that the signs 'a', 'R' and 'b' are written in a particular way expresses the fact that aRb. Thus 'R' is not the name of an object. Obviously, then, no relations among objects are themselves objects.

If for the sake of argument we grant the view that objects include relations, we find ourselves involved in a difficulty which cannot be solved. If relations were objects like the objects they relate, then we would be lost in an infinite regress. The reason is simple. If the relation

that relates two objects is an object, then it itself stands in need of being related to those objects, and so on ad infinitum. The only way to stop this regress is to deny that relations are objects. And that is what Wittgenstein does. By denying that relations are objects he is able to solve the Bradlean puzzle of relations. Bradley is unable to get out of the infinite regress of relations simply because he conceives a relation as something just as substantial as its terms. Wittgenstein points out that relations are only ways, showing how objects stand, not objects requiring further relations. The use of substantive terms for relations is misleading, and is in the root of the Bradlean puzzle.

Thirdly, what Wittgenstein has to say about the properties can be construed as an argument in favour of the view that objects are only particulars. During the period 1914-16, Wittgenstein definitely maintained that universals are included in the class of objects. He wrote in the entry for 16.6.16 : "Relations and properties, etc., are objects too". But in the *Tractatus* he makes no mention of this view.

33
 Stenius, however, has given an argument which, if correct, establishes the view I am trying to refute. His interpretation is, that an object's having a property depends on its being combined with a universal. In a state of affairs, e.g.

33. Stenius, E., Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, p. 62.

a's being red, a must be configured with redness, since there is no other object with which a can be combined. "Redness" must be counted, then, as an object. In opposi-
 34
 tion to this interpretation Pitcher holds the view that an object's having a property is not a matter of its being configured with a universal, but rather of its being configured with other simple particulars. Take the state of affairs a's being red. The real form of this state of affairs may be a-b-c, rather than a-red. But even this account is not very satisfactory. When it is said that a is red, what is meant is that a is a complex thing with a definite structure. To say that a is red amounts to saying, on analysis, that a's elements (particulars) are configured in a certain way. Thus the real form of a is red, is not 'a-red', nor 'a-b-c-d' but 'e-f-g-h'. Here e,f,g,h are particulars which constitute the complex "a" which is red. This interpretation is, certainly, in consonance with Wittgenstein's view of properties. Wittgenstein explains properties in terms of relations. An object's having a property, e.g., redness, depends on its elements being related in a definite way. Wittgenstein says at T 2.0231 :

The substance of the world can only determine a form, and not any material properties. For it is only by means of propositions that material properties are represented -- only by the configuration of objects that they are produced.

Fourthly, the consideration of colours strengthens

34. Pitcher, G., The Philosophy of Wittgenstein, p. 117.

the view that properties are not objects. Wittgenstein says that "It is a sign of an elementary proposition, that no elementary proposition can contradict it." T 4.211. But if properties are objects, and elementary propositions are combinations of names of objects, then the two propositions, one asserting a given point to be red, the other asserting it to be blue, must contradict each other. The assertion that a point in the visual field has two different colours at the same time, is a contradiction.³⁵ It means, red and blue are not names of objects. And, by implication, properties are not objects. Wittgenstein's central thesis seems to be, that objects being simple have no structure, and consequently, anything which has structure is a fact and not an object. The 'a' in 'a is red' must be a complex : a red object is red, because it has a definite structure.³⁶ What is true about colour is true about sounds too. Sounds also have a structure. The same is true of the circular form.³⁷ These properties are, then, structural and depend on the configuration of objects. They are not objects.

Lastly, this view is confirmed by Wittgenstein's later remarks where, after mentioning the Theaetetus doctrine that "primary elements can only be named", he says, "Both Russell's

35. T 6.3751.

36. Notebooks, entry for 11.9.16.

37. Notebooks, entry for 18.6.15.

individuals, and my 'objects' (Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus) were such primary elements." These considerations very well establish the view that Wittgenstein's objects are simple particulars.

Granted that Wittgenstein's objects are simple particulars, what exactly they are? What more can we say about them? What are their specific instances? These are some important questions which the very moment they are asked create troubles. One way to answer these questions is to know Wittgenstein's criterion of simplicity. Unless we have a clear view of the criterion of simplicity we cannot determine what exactly the objects are. But it is simply irritating to find that Wittgenstein has given no criterion of simplicity, nor any hint for the reader. The entire matter is open to guess and conjectures. One of such conjectures is, that the criterion is anthropocentric, i.e., what counts as an object is something we determine. To speak still clearly, the simple object would be determined by the language we decide to use. To express the same thing in another way : what corresponds in the world to what is simple in the language we use, is to be counted as simple. Maslow, due to his positivistic prejudices, succumbs to this suggestion. He says, "And my contention is that any criterion or rule of simplicity whatever is to be arbitrarily assigned by ourselves, and that

there is nothing in reality to impose upon us any rule."³⁹
 This could have been an acceptable suggestion. But the following points prevent us from embracing this interpretation :

That objects form the substance of the world.
 (T 2.021)

That objects exist independently of what is the case. (T 2.024)

That objects are fixed, unalterable. (T 2.0271)

That there is one and only one complete analysis of the proposition. (T 3.26)

That this analysis is not arbitrary (T 3.3442)

Wittgenstein says that "Even if the world is infinitely complex, so that every fact consists of an infinite number of atomic facts and every atomic fact is composed of an infinite number of objects, even then, there must be objects and atomic facts." T 4.3211.

These convictions of Wittgenstein clearly show that he cannot be an advocate of the doctrine that analysis can be either initiated or stopped arbitrarily. The simplicity is not to be judged by the language we use. Objects are simple independently of our language. No doubt, Wittgenstein proceeds from the side of language, and it is his confident conviction that there must be simples to explain the significance of language, but it does not commit him to the

39. Maslow, Ar, A Study in Wittgenstein's Tractatus, p. 20.

view that simplicity is imposed by the language. It is certainly a wrong interpretation to say that "The definiteness of sense is not, of course, absolute but only relative to our language and to the context in which a proposition is used."⁴⁰ Maslow himself acknowledges that there are metaphysical tendencies in the Tractatus.⁴¹ He says that at times Wittgenstein means by 'object' the ultimate ontological entities, something akin to Whitehead's 'objects',⁴² and Santayana's 'essences'. But he rejects this aspect in favour of his positivistic interpretation of the Tractatus. To me it seems that by an 'object' Wittgenstein means the ontological substance of the world. But what exactly an object is? What is the actual illustration of such an object?

Wittgenstein never bothers to discuss these questions in detail. In T 5.55's Wittgenstein clearly maintains that he is not concerned with the actual examples because the actual analysis falls outside the scope of logic. There must be names and elementary propositions, and objects and atomic facts, not because experience exhibits them, but because logic demands them. It is his firm conviction that a proposition can have a definite sense only when expressed in terms of elementary propositions. It means there must be

40. Maslow, A., A Study in Wittgenstein's Tractatus, p. 71.

41. Ibid., p. 11.

42. Ibid., p. 11.

objects, and it matters little if we fail to give any example. He was so much convinced of his thesis that he did not even think it necessary to give examples. He writes in the entry for 14.6.13(f). ".....it seems that the idea of the SIMPLE is already to be found contained in that of the complex and in the idea of analysis, and in such a way that we come to this idea quite apart from any examples of simple objects, or of propositions which mention them, and we realise the existence of the simple object -- a priori -- as a logical necessity." According to the following report of Malcolm, Wittgenstein treated actual examples as a matter of empirical investigations : "I asked Wittgenstein whether, when he wrote the *Tractatus*, he had ever decided upon anything as an example of a 'simple object'. His reply was that at that time his thought had been that he was a logician; and that it was not his business, as a logician, to try to decide whether this thing or that was a simple thing or a complex thing, that being a purely empirical matter! It was clear that he regarded his former opinion as absurd."⁴³ This sublime view of logic certainly misled him. Had he felt the importance of actual examples he would have realised the absurdity of his position much earlier. As is obvious by now, it is necessary to understand clearly what the simple objects really are.

Griffin and Pitcher identify simples with material

⁴³. Malcolm, N., *Memoir*, p. 86.

points. Wittgenstein himself has used this expression!

"The division of the body into material points, as we have it in physics, is nothing more than analysis into simple components."⁴⁴ Further, from a variety of examples that⁴⁵ Wittgenstein offers, it is easy to gather the impression that his simple objects are material points. Finally, his notion of analysis also suggests that by objects he means material points.

But there are certain difficulties which must be solved before we accept the material point interpretation or even the view that objects are particulars. The greatest difficulty in this interpretation is the problem of naming the objects. Thinking the sense of a proposition involves correlating names and objects. Moreover, it is Wittgenstein's fundamental doctrine that the meaning of a name is the object it denotes. It amounts to saying that in order to know the meaning of a name one has to know the object it denotes. It means that objects are open to observation. Thus direct acquaintance is essential on this theory to correlate the names and the objects. But how can we have direct acquaintance with the objects like material points? Simple qualities are definitely observable but objects are not qualities. Not even universal qualities are objects. And all the observable objects are complex. They have some structure and admit further analysis. Wittgenstein admits in the

44. Notebooks; 20.6.15(m).

45. Notebooks, 23.5.15(f), 15.6.15(c), 16.6.15(a,h,k), 25.4.15(e), 9.5.15(a-e).

46

Notebooks that we have no acquaintance with simple objects. Both Griffin and Pitcher admit this difficulty. Griffin says, "It is not clear how one would name material simples. On my interpretation naming would have to be totally divorced from acquaintance."⁴⁷ But he gives no other way to explain the naming process. Pitcher tries to explain it with the help of Wittgenstein's remark that "If I know an object I also know all its possible occurrences in states of affairs." T 2.0123. Thus he holds that objects can be known without acquaintance with them. He says, "To know an object just is to know what sorts of states of affairs it can enter into, and that is to know what Wittgenstein calls its internal properties."⁴⁸ But how can we know even the internal properties of the objects without knowing them individually? Pitcher himself admits it, though, half heartedly: "To know objects in this way, it must be confessed, is not to know them very well. I cannot, for example, know them as individuals."⁴⁹ Thus it remains a mystery how simple objects are named and how language connects up with the world. It is a major threat to the grand mansion of the Tractarian philosophy.

Let us see if there is any other alternative that can avoid this ship wreck. David Keyt has ably argued for the

30

46. Notebooks, 24.5.18.

47. Griffin, J., Wittgenstein's Logical Atomism, p.155.

48. Pitcher, G., The Philosophy of Wittgenstein, p.126.

49. Ibid., p. 126.

50. Keyt, D., 'A New Interpretation of the Tractatus Examined' PR April, 1965, pp. 220-230

sense-datum interpretation. His aim is not to reject the material point interpretation, but to make out a case for the sense-datum interpretation with equal force. He says, "What I try to show in the rest of this paper is that a sense datum interpretation, if properly construed, in fact encounters fewer difficulties than the material point interpretation. Probably the wisest conclusion to reach is that Wittgenstein, in so far as he was concerned with the question of examples at all, did intend for the Tractatus to embrace both interpretations."⁵¹ Wittgenstein himself has used the sense-datum language. At times visual sense data or their parts⁵² are given as examples of objects.

Thus Wittgenstein's use of the sense-datum language and the difficulties involved in the material point interpretation suggest forcefully that Wittgenstein's objects are things like sense data. The sense-datum interpretation also solves the problem of naming. Objects are obviously observable on this interpretation and can be easily named. The popular reading of the Tractatus that facts are basic units of experience and elementary propositions are observation-statements, confirms this sense-datum view. But the following objections make this interpretation almost indefensible :

- (1) Wittgenstein talks of the possibility (T 2.014) and existence (T 2.027) of objects. But sense-

51. Ibid, p. 232.

52. Notebooks, 6.3.13(d), 13.6.15(1), 9.6.15(a).

data are either actual or not at all, and there is no sense in attributing possibility to them. It makes no sense to say that sense-data are possible. Similarly it makes no sense to speak of the existence of sense-data.

- (ii) The sense-datum interpretation conflicts with Wittgenstein's account of elementary propositions. Elementary propositions are said to be logically independent of each other (2.6.211). If so, no proposition referring to colours can be an elementary proposition. For example, the proposition "this red now" cannot be an elementary proposition, because it is contrary of the proposition "this green now". It follows that "this" is not a name, and the speck is not an object.
- (iii) The sense-datum interpretation does not fit Wittgenstein's theory of properties. I have already mentioned that in his opinion objects determine no material properties; these are constituted by the configuration of objects. All material properties have a structure and can be analysed away. When we apply some observable property to anything, what is meant is that the simple constituents of this complex are configured in a certain way. Thus properties cannot be objects; they are products. Objects are, as Wittgenstein says, colourless.
- Thus we are left in a peculiar situation. Both

material point and sense-datum interpretations are full of difficulties and cannot be defended satisfactorily. The view that Wittgenstein might have intended to include both particulars and universals in his category of objects does not solve the problem. The fundamental question is not what Wittgenstein thought these objects to be like, but what they can really be. It is true that he has used both object and sense-datum languages; but it is equally true that neither interpretation is able to meet his conceptions of meaning and analysis. No serious student of Wittgenstein's philosophy would like to leave this problem so cruelly incomplete. There must be some solution, if what we are involved in is a real problem. And here I find a clue which must be tried. The clue is that we are involved in a pseudo problem. Wittgenstein was misled by the idea of analysis. The reductive analysis -- the view that it is possible to get the definite sense if, and only if, the complex can be reduced to absolute simples -- is the chief cause of the entire trouble. It led him to believe that the real form of the proposition is hidden, and analysis brings it to light. He seems to believe that whatever his logic demands must be fulfilled by experience. The demands for exact sense and absolute simples were the ideals that misled him, the pictures that held his intelligence captive. He failed to realise that there is no single ideal of exactness. He missed to see that nothing is in itself absolutely simple. He could not realise that exactness and simplicity are deter-

mined by the contexts in which they are considered. The Tractatus was written under the spell of a superstition. The entire problem is misconceived. The only solution is to see through the illusion and avoid the erroneous conclusions. The solution lies in doing away with the problem, and not in any attempt to determine what the objects really are. This interpretation is in harmony with the reactions of the later Wittgenstein to his earlier views.

Our account clearly exposes the absurdity of the doctrine of the simples. Since the atomic facts are the configurations of the simples, with the rejection of the latter the former are bound to go. There are no simple objects, there cannot be atomic facts. With this, the whole edifice of the Tractatus crumbles down.

CHAPTER - III

A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE TRACTATUS LOGICO-PHILOSOPHICUS
(continued)

Having considered the ontological structure of the world, Wittgenstein proceeds to examine what is necessarily involved in any symbolic representation of the world. The central questions are : what must our language be in order to represent the world adequately and completely? How is language linked with reality? How can language be significant at all? How is it that we know the sense of a proposition before we can determine its truth-value? To put things tentatively, Wittgenstein's answer is : we make to ourselves pictures of facts (T 2.1). The picture is a model of reality (T 2.12) and is a fact (T 2.141).

A word of warning is in order : A picture is not necessarily a linguistic picture. A linguistic picture is only a species of the genus "picture". Wittgenstein speaks of at least two other species of pictures : physical pictures and psychical pictures. Gramophone records and musical scores are pictures (T 4.014). A picture can consist of even spatial objects such as tables, chairs, books etc. (T 3.1431). Then thoughts are pictures (T 3, 3.1).

However, I am concerned here with linguistic pictures or propositional signs and words. I am dealing mainly with the essence of spoken and written languages. I have already mentioned that Wittgenstein arrived at his conclusions, and solved the fundamental questions concerning the symbolic representations of the world, not by actual investigations but by certain a priori considerations of meaning and sense. Before we can successfully discuss the relation of language with the world, it is necessary to understand the nature of these considerations.

What, to begin with, is an elementary proposition? Wittgenstein has used three words in this connection which must be clearly understood. The first is the 'Satzzeichen' (in both the Ogden and the Pears and Mc Guinness translations 'propositional sign'). Following Pierce it may be described as 'sentence-token' - the actual inscriptions or sounds written or made. Thus by 'Satzzeichen' Wittgenstein means any particular sign or a group of signs that may be used to express a proposition. Secondly, we have the 'Sinnvoller Satz' (in Ogden : 'significant proposition', in Pears and Mc Guinness : 'proposition with a sense'). We can say that Satzzeichen are signs and Sinnvolle Sätze are Satzzeichen-plus-sense. Thirdly, we have the 'Satz' (both in Ogden and Pears and Mc Guinness : 'proposition'). In the terminology of Pierce it may be described as 'sentence-type'. Stenius translates it as 'sentence'. In the opinion of Griffin, a Satz is more than signs but less than symbols. It is

"the Satzzeichen plus its projective relation to the world."¹

"It is a combination of words along with their syntactical application."² However the convenient way to translate the 'Satz' is 'proposition'. What is important here is that Wittgenstein is interested in the use of the 'Satz'. It is only the use of the 'Satz' that makes it both significant and true or false. Moreover Wittgenstein does not always distinguish between the 'Satz' and the 'Sinnvoller Satz'.

Let us, then discuss the meaning and nature of elementary (or atomic) propositions. With regard to the question posed earlier, the simple straightforward answer is that it cannot be analysed any further into more basic propositions. It does not mean that it is absolutely simple. Like atomic facts it is complex and has components. But its components are not themselves propositions. They are, rather, names. An elementary proposition, according to Wittgenstein, consists of names. He says : "The elementary proposition consists of names. It is a connection, a concatenation, of names," (T 4.22). It is obvious that in the analysis of propositions we must come to elementary propositions, which consist of names in immediate combination (T 4.221(a)).

We must understand, then, what is a name? Ordinarily

1. Griffin, J., Wittgenstein's Logical Atomism, p.129.

2. Ibid, p. 130.

we use 'name' to designate things and persons. For example, cow, Austin, Ganges, rose, circle etc. But they are not names in Wittgenstein's technical sense. By 'name' he means a primitive sign which can neither be verbally defined nor structurally analysed. "The name cannot be analysed further by any definition. It is a primitive sign," (T 3.26). It explains why ordinary names cannot count as names in Wittgenstein's sense. They are not names because their meanings can be explained by giving some essential characteristics about the thing or person they name. They are, in Russell's language, abbreviated descriptions. In the symbolism of Russell 'this' is a proper name and is free from descriptions. But if objects are not observables, Wittgenstein would reject even this ostensive definition. Names cannot be defined either descriptively or ostensively.

It follows from this that names name something simple — something which has no possibility of further analysis. If a name denoted something complex, it would be a fact and not an object. Here a significant point emerges. Frege made a distinction between *Bedeutung* (meaning) and *Sinn* (sense). He applied both *Sinn* and *Bedeutung* to sentences. But Wittgenstein points out that propositions have only sense, they cannot be named. Names always denote what is simple, they can never designate complexes. Facts can be only described : "state of affairs can be described but not named," (T 3.144). This contention is of great importance in Wittgenstein's philosophy of language. As

names stand for something, if a proposition were a complex name, it would have to stand for something. But then there is no possibility of false propositions. Also if there were no difference between a proposition and a name, the distinction between fact and object would collapse.

Thus Wittgenstein advocates a Bearer-theory of meaning for names. The name is a primitive sign which stands for a simple object : "The name means the object. The object is its meaning." (T 3.303). "In the proposition the name represents the object" (T 3.32). He believes that the meaning of any term is the object it denotes. But he makes an exception in favour of logical constants : "My fundamental thought is that the 'logical constants' do not represent." T 4.0312(2). The signs ' \sim ' and '.' denote nothing. They are needed simply to construct non-elementary propositions. They are thus only syntactical devices, not names. Thus Wittgenstein is not an advocate of the absurd theory that every term must denote something.

There is another point of importance. His claim that propositions are combinations of names, applies only to elementary propositions. Names occur only in the completely analysed propositions. Molecular and general propositions depict the world only indirectly, namely, via elementary propositions.

Now we are in a position to understand why there must be names. For Wittgenstein an indefinite sense is no

sense at all. The definite sense is given by a complete analysis. The meaning of the terms of a proposition depends on those of the simpler propositions. But if the terms of these simpler propositions are themselves definable, the same thing applies to them. The analysis into more basic terms continues as long as the terms are definable. If the series is infinitely long there is no possibility of either sense or truth. At some point it must stop, as propositions do have sense. There must, then, be elementary propositions consisting of only names. So long as there is generality or description, there is the possibility of further analysis. Indeterminateness is avoided only when the primitive signs are reached. Names and elementary propositions are, then, demands of analysis and definite sense.

The above discussion may give the impression that names are the primary units of language. But the truth is otherwise. "Only the proposition has sense; only in the context of a proposition has a name meaning" T 3.3. This thesis is of capital importance. It is of the essence of a name to be governed by the syntactical rules of the language. A given name is subject to rules of combination through which the form of the name is manifested. As an object must exist in some state of affairs so a name must exist in some elementary proposition. Outside the proposition it is lifeless. The only way to convey its meaning is to use the name in a proposition. It is a pity that Wittgenstein leaves us in a paradox. In T 3.263 he says

that (i) the meanings of names can be explained in elucidations, but (ii) elucidations can only be understood when the meanings of names are already known. He does not try to resolve the paradox. He might have considered it a matter of empirical science to determine how to resolve the paradox, i.e., how to learn names. His thesis that names have meaning only in the propositions is definitely true. What leads him to the paradox is the Bearer-theory of meaning, which he himself attacked in his later writings.

We have seen that according to Wittgenstein the primary units of language are elementary propositions which consist entirely of names. What more can be said about these propositions? The most important thing about a proposition is its sense. We can understand what a proposition means even if we have never come across it before. If we already understand the meaning of the words of a new proposition, we can easily grasp its sense. For Wittgenstein this feature of language is of great importance. "It belongs to the essence of a proposition that it should be able to communicate a new sense to us." (T 4.027). Next, we can understand a proposition even when it is false, or a proposition about whose truth or falsity we are in doubt. It clearly points to the fact that the sense of a proposition is independent of its truth-value. Let us, then, consider the important characteristics of the sense of propositions.

First, the sense of a proposition is the situation

it describes. A proposition, as we shall see, is a 'logical picture', and "what the picture represents is its sense".

¶ 2.221. "One can say, instead of, This proposition has such and such a sense, This proposition represents such and such a state of affairs." ¶ 4.031(2). Thus the sense of a proposition is the situation or state of affairs it depicts or describes or represents. A proposition is the description of a fact (state of affairs), [¶ 4.023(6)]. It refers to the possible state of affairs. To understand a proposition means to know what is the case, if it is true. [¶ 4.029(1)]. This way of stating the nature of a proposition forces upon us certain important conclusions. First of all the significant propositions are limited to possible facts. Any proposition whether elementary or molecular if it is not about facts-actual or possible-- is senseless. Hence metaphysical propositions are not false, but simply senseless. Similar is the fate of ethical, aesthetic and religious languages. They are neither true nor false, but senseless, or to say figuratively, empty or devoid of meaning. Secondly, it leads to the view that the same reality corresponds to a proposition and to its negation. Let us see how it is so.

We can start with a problem : If the sense of a proposition is the situation it depicts, then what about the false propositions? We can maintain that false propositions are senseless. But this is absurd for at least two reasons : First, we understand a false proposition, and secondly, unless

a proposition has sense it can be neither true nor false. Let us try, then, another alternative, i.e., there must be non-existent situations which the false propositions depict. Wittgenstein uses the terms 'situation' (Sachlage) and 'state of affairs' (Sachverhalt), in such a way that we can speak of them as both actual (existent) and possible (non-existent). A state of affairs is, according to Wittgenstein, "a combination of objects". Some combinations of objects exist, and some combinations of objects do not exist. The latter may be called negative facts (T2.06(2)). But what is a negative fact? A possible answer would be; a negative fact is an existent combination of objects with the object not. But Wittgenstein rejects this answer. He maintains that not does not denote an object. He says in T 4.062(1) : ".....Nothing in reality corresponds to the sign '~'." A second alternative may be that negative facts are combinations of non-existent objects. But this is equally absurd. There is nothing like a non-existent object. What then is a negative fact? Russell thought that like the positive facts, there are also negative facts which correspond to the negative propositions. But Wittgenstein rejects this answer. He is not prepared to attribute either existence or subsistence to negative facts. Negative facts do not form a shadowy kind of being. His real thesis is that, a negative fact is merely the non-existence of a possible state of affairs, [T 2.06(2)]. Both existent and non-existent states of affairs are combinations of existent objects :

"an existent state of affairs is an actual arrangement of existent objects, a non-existent state of affairs is a non-actual arrangement of existent objects." So he concludes that corresponding to both ' p ' and ' $\neg p$ ', there is the same state of affairs. ' p ' says that a state of affairs exists, while ' $\neg p$ ' says that it does not exist. It means there can be no negative states of affairs. Further, there can be no negative elementary propositions. All elementary propositions are positive. Negative propositions are only truth-functions of positive elementary propositions. The second important thing to be noted in connection with the sense of a proposition is that the sense is logically independent of the existence of the fact it is about. "The picture represents what it represents independently of its truth or falsehood" T 2.22. "To understand a proposition, means to know what is the case if it is true. (One can therefore, understand it without knowing whether it is true or not)" T 4.024(1,2). There is no contradiction in saying that a proposition has a sense, that it depicts a fact, when there is no fact corresponding to it. It is possible to describe what does not exist. Had the sense been dependent on the facts (actual states of affairs), it would have been logically impossible to express propositions without a prior knowledge of their truth. Thirdly, the sense of an

elementary proposition must be fixed and definite: If the sense of a proposition is not definite, then, we have no definite proposition at all. A proposition which contains indeterminateness is not an elementary proposition. An elementary proposition consists entirely of names, and names, being primitive signs, are definite. Consequently the sense of a fully analysed proposition is fixed and exact. It follows from what has just been said, that elementary propositions are such that for them there are no two ways of being true or false, but only one.

An important feature of elementary propositions is their independence. This contention is only the linguistic counterpart of his ontology. The atomic facts are, according to Wittgenstein, independent of one another. An atomic fact has no connections of any kind with others. Now what he says for states of affairs he also claims, *mutatis mutandis*, for elementary propositions :

One elementary proposition cannot be deduced from another. T 5.134.

It is a sign of an elementary proposition, that no elementary proposition can contradict it. T 4.211.

What Wittgenstein intends to say is, not only that two elementary propositions cannot be contradictories, but also that they cannot be even contraries. They are independent of one another in the absolute sense. This absolute independence is really a puzzling thesis and difficult to maintain. Wittgenstein later on abandoned the view that no

elementary propositions can be contraries. But he still maintained that they cannot be contradictories. Thus the modification leaves much of what Wittgenstein says in the *Tractatus* about the independence of propositions intact.

Having considered some important characteristics of elementary propositions we are in a position to discuss the central problem: How can an elementary proposition say or state anything? A proposition is said to be a combination of names. But can a mere list of names state or depict a fact? Another problem allied with this is (which I have already hinted at), : How is it that we can express and understand new propositions? It is a remarkable feature about all the significant languages that while we cannot understand the meaning of terms unless we are told, we understand new propositions which use the familiar terms (T 4.02). How to explain this peculiar phenomenon?

Wittgenstein tries to solve these puzzling features of language by his doctrine, that the proposition must be a picture of the situation it describes. To understand the sense of a proposition is to know the situation it describes. I can 'read off' the sense of a proposition from the proposition itself, if, and only if, the proposition is a picture of the situation.

"A proposition is a picture of reality, for I know the state of affairs presented by it, if I understand the proposition. And I understand the proposition, without its sense having been explained to me."

T 4.021.

This is a plausible answer. As I can 'read off' the sense of a proposition from the proposition itself, so can I know the situation depicted by the picture merely by looking at the picture. Wittgenstein thus maintains that a proposition says something just because it is a picture :

The proposition asserts something only in so far as it is a picture.

§ 4.03(4).

Granted that a proposition says something only because it is a picture of the situation it represents, the first question still remains to be answered : If an elementary proposition is merely a series of names -- a medley of names, how can it picture a fact? It is just impossible that a list of names could be a picture. Wittgenstein is fully aware of the objection, and proceeds to examine the essential features of a picture. What is necessary for any picture to represent a situation? What is it precisely and exactly that makes a picture to depict something?

Before coming to Wittgenstein's concept of picture, it would be profitable to consider the ordinary notion of a picture. It is not an unnecessary digression, seeing how the critical remarks of even able philosophers have gone wide of the mark, simply because they interpreted the term 'picture' in its ordinary sense. For example, Urason says: "Wittgenstein was surely wrong in claiming that even perfect sentences were pictures 'even in the ordinary sense of the

word'. To say that this is so, involves taking accuracy of projection as the criterion for perfection in a representational portrait. But this will not do. However, accurately our childish drawing obeyed some discoverable law of projection, we would not say that it was a portrait of Napoleon -- good or bad ----- We in fact call things pictures because of a recognizable likeness, not because of fidelity to some unknown rule of projection.⁵ The last sentence puts the point well. It is the recognizable similarity or the first sight likeness that makes anything picture of something. This is clearly implied in the expressions -- a picture of Napoleon, a picture of a dog, a bust of Shelly, a photograph of a woman's face, a photograph of the Taj Mahal. In Wittgenstein's language, they are spatial pictures [2.2.171(2)]. They are iconic pictures. In all these cases there is a first sight similarity of shape, order and colour, between the object pictured and the picture. A proposition is not a picture in this sense. The proposition 'The red ball is on the white table-cloth' or the more precise expression 'bRT' is quite unlike the red ball and the white table-cloth. Wittgenstein never meant that a proposition could be a picture of the situation it represents in this sense. Hence any criticism which interprets propositions to be pictures in this sense is misdirected. Why, then, Wittgenstein maintains that a proposition is a picture of a certain state of affairs? To

answer this question, it would be advantageous to state a possible objection Wittgenstein could raise against the first sight similarity view of pictures. He could say : if the surface-resemblance is the essence of a picture, then no picture is an adequate representation of the situation it purports to depict. Not all the features of the original object are exactly represented by even the most faithful photographs. The essential feature of the picture, Wittgenstein may say, is not the external similarity (the first sight similarity), but the internal similarity, i.e. the similarity of the form. It is primarily the similarity (or identity) of the concatenation that makes anything a picture. All the pictures even the pictures in the ordinary sense, have the forms of the objects they picture. That is why Wittgenstein says, that a picture of any form (spatial, temporal, coloured etc.) is also at the same time a logical picture, i.e., it must have the form of the thing it represents.

What every picture, of whatever form, must have in common with reality in order to be able to represent it at all -- rightly or falsely -- is the logical form, that is, the form of reality. T 2.18.

Every picture is also a logical picture. (On the other hand, for example, not every picture is spatial). T 2.182.

There is a point of fundamental importance to note, that both spatial and logical pictures have a common characteristic viz. both are concatenations of picturing elements. A painting

is not just a hodge-podge collection of colour-patches, but their definite arrangement. It is the arrangement that makes anything a picture. In this respect, both logical and ordinary pictures are similar.

It follows from the above discussion that a picture is a fact. In it the picturing elements stand in a definite relation to one another, and it is only by virtue of this relationship of the elements, that it can represent a situation :

The picture consists in the fact that its elements are combined with one another in a definite way. T 2.14.

The picture is a fact. T 2.141.

That the elements of the picture are combined with one another in a definite way, represents that the things are so combined with one another. T 2.15(1).

We can easily understand how a proposition can state or depict a state of affairs. A proposition is not a mere series or list of names. On the contrary, Wittgenstein says, it is a "nexus, a concatenation, of names." T 4.22. He says still clearly at T 3.141(1), "A proposition is not a mixture of words." It clearly shows that what is significant about a proposition is, that in it names are arranged in a certain way, just as in a coloured picture the colour-patches are arranged in a certain way. Hence Wittgenstein says : "Only facts can express a sense, a class of names cannot." T.3.142. It means that a proposition can picture a fact because it is itself a fact, i.e., a

concatenation of names.

Let us consider now in detail, how a logical picture can represent a situation. First a point of historical interest may be mentioned. G.H. von Wright⁶ informs us how the idea of language as a picture of reality occurred to Wittgenstein. Wittgenstein was reading a magazine in which he saw a schematic picture depicting the possible sequence of events in an automobile accident. The picture served as a proposition describing a possible state of affairs. Wittgenstein thought to reverse the analogy, and declared that a proposition could serve as a picture. Further, any external source that seems to have influenced Wittgenstein's thinking is Hertz's *The Principles of Mechanics*. He has himself referred to it in the *Tractatus* (4.04). Hertz puts forward the picture theory in discussing his doctrine of models. He says that "there must be a certain conformity between nature and our thought."⁷ There must be conformity because "the form which we give (pictures) is such that the necessary consequents of the pictures (Bilder) in thought are always the pictures (Bilder) of the necessary consequents in nature of the things pictured."⁸ What are the features that pictures must share with their facts? According to Hertz a system that is the model of another must satisfy the condition "that the number of coordinates of the first system

6. von Wright, G.H., 'Biographical Sketch' reprinted in Malcolm's *Memoir*, pp. 7-8.

7. Hertz, *The Principles of Mechanics*, p. 1.

8. *Ibid*, p. 1.

is equal to the number of the second.⁹ This short comparison is sufficient to prove that the picture theory was suggested by Hertz. Wittgenstein developed it consistently and applied it to the whole of language.

Coming to the theory itself, a fact can picture another, if, and only if, the following conditions are met.

First, there must be a one-to-one correspondence between the elements of the picturing and the pictured facts.

To the objects correspond in the picture the elements of the picture. T 2.13.

The elements of the picture stand, in the picture, for the objects. T 2.131.

In the proposition the name represents the object. T 3.22.

The proposition shows how things stand, if it is true. T 4.022(2).

One name stands for one thing, and another for another for another thing, and they are connected together. And so the whole, like a living picture, presents the atomic fact. T 4.0311.

The possibility of propositions is based upon the principle of the representation of objects by signs. T 4.0312(1).

In the proposition there must be exactly as many things distinguishable as there are in the state of affairs, which it represents. T 4.04(1).

It means that the first essential requirement of the possibility of picturing is 'the same logical (mathematical) multiplicity'. There are as many elements in the picturing -

9. Ibid, para 428

fact as there are in the pictured-fact. And between their elements there is a one-to-one correspondence.

Secondly, to every feature of the structure or form of the picturing fact there must correspond a feature of the structure or form of the pictured fact. What is important here is the form of representation. It is the very heart of the picture-theory. Wittgenstein says :

In order to be a picture a fact must have something in common with what it pictures. T 2.15.

In the picture and the pictured there must be something identical in order that the one can be a picture of the other at all. T 2.161.

What the picture must have in common with reality in order to be able to represent it after its manner -- rightly or falsely -- is its form of representation. T 2.17.

The picture can represent every reality whose form it has. T 2.171(1).

These passages clearly point out that for Wittgenstein a picture can picture a fact if both of them have the same form. The form of representation is common to both the proposition and the fact it depicts. But what is the form of representation?

We have already seen that a state of affairs is not a jumble of objects. Rather, in it, objects are related in a definite way (T 2.031). Similarly a proposition is not only a medley of words. It is, rather, a concatenation of names (T 3.1-1-2). Wittgenstein says that this definite combination implies both structure and form.

The way in which objects hang together in the atomic fact is the structure of the atomic fact. T 2.032.

The form is the possibility of the structure.
T 2.033.

He says exactly the same thing for the structure and form of the picture :

That the elements of the picture are combined with one another in a definite way, represents that the things are so combined with one another. T 2.15.

The particular way in which elements of the picture and the pictured fact cohere in the picture and the state of affairs respectively, is the structure; and the possibility of this structure is the form. It may appear that the identity of the form of representation is nothing more than that the picture and the fact must have the same mathematical multiplicity. A fact is a combination of some objects in a determinate way, so all that is required to picture this fact is that the picturing fact contains the same number of elements. But the demand for the common form is more than a demand for the same mathematical multiplicity.

We may raise two questions : why should there be this identity? and what is this identity? The first question is important because it seeks to determine the relation of language and the world. The main problem is how to understand the 'common bond' between a proposition and reality or between thought and reality. There seems to be a gulf between language or thought and reality, and yet, the former

is able to express the latter. This is possible, Wittgenstein argues, because language, the pict, and reality are bound together by the identity of the logical form. The form of representation expresses the possibility that things are combined in the state of affairs in the same way. Thus the picture is linked with reality; it reaches up to it (T 2.1511).

The second question seeks to explain the nature of this common bond -- the identity of the form. Does it consist in the same number of objects or is it something more? Griffin rightly remarks that "names really represent their things when they have more than just a one-to-one correlation with them, when, in other words, they also behave as regards combining as the things behave."¹⁰ Wittgenstein maintains that it is the form of representation that makes a fact the picture of another fact. Then he says in T 2.1514, that "the representing relation consists of the coordinations of the elements of the picture and the things." Now the coordinations of the elements can determine the representing relation, if the elements of the pictures adopt the form of the objects of the states of affairs. Wittgenstein writes in the Notebooks " 'a' can go proxy for a and 'b' can go proxy for b when 'a' stands in the relation 'R' to 'b' : this is what that Potential internal relation that we are looking for consists in."¹¹ It means names can designate

10. Griffin, J., Wittgenstein's Logical Atomism, p.93.

11. 3.4.15(n).

things only if they behave like the objects. The elements in the picture can combine with one another only in the same way which is possible for the objects they denote.

However, the central point is that the pictured-fact and the picturing-fact have the common form by virtue of which the latter can picture the former. Wittgenstein also identifies the form of representation with the logical form. He says that every picture of whatever form, must have in common with reality the logical form. If the form of representation is the logical form, then the picture is called a logical picture (T 2.181). Then he says that every picture is also a logical picture (T 2.182). Finally, the picture has the logical form of representation in common with what it pictures (T 2.2). The form of language is a clue to the form of reality.

Thirdly, there must be rules of projection (T 4.0141) connecting the elements of the picturing-fact and those of the pictured-fact. "Rules of projection are rules whereby given A (or B), B (or A) can be reconstructed from it."¹² Wittgenstein illustrates this point in T 4.0141, where he says that there is a general rule which connects a musical score and an actual performance of it, so that when the one is given it is always possible to reconstruct the other from it. What is true of the rules connecting a musical score and an actual performance, is equally true for the

12. Pitcher, G., The Philosophy of Wittgenstein, p. 75.

propositions. Wittgenstein maintains that the proposition is a projection of the situation it describes :

"We use the sensibly perceptible sign (sound or written sign, etc.) of the proposition as a projection of the possible state of affairs." T 3.11.

The idea of projection is of fundamental importance because it illuminates the essential characteristics of the propositions : It explains how it is possible to understand the sense of a proposition even when we have no prior knowledge of it. One can understand a new proposition since he knows the general rules of projection of the language. It also explains how we can construct propositions which may be false. In a proposition a situation is, as it were, constructed by way of experiment (T 4.031). If there is no fact corresponding to it the proposition is false. Because of the general rules one knows what would be the case if the proposition were true.

When Wittgenstein says that there are rules of projection for language which make a propositional sign the projection of a particular possible situation what he means is that people do it by thinking the sense of the proposition (T 3.11). The act of thinking the sense of a proposition is a mental activity which consists in correlating the names of the propositional sign and the objects of the corresponding state of affairs. Wittgenstein says in the *Notebooks* : "By my correlating the components of the picture with objects, it comes to represent a situation and to be

right or wrong." (26.11.14). Similarly he says in the entries for 30.5.15 and 15.6.15 that the thinker (or the writer or speaker) correlates names with things. The correlation is something that I do by intending the names to stand for the objects. It follows from this that a propositional sign in itself cannot picture a particular possible situation. It is made to picture the situation by us when its elements are correlated with the elements of reality. Then it becomes a proposition : "a proposition is a propositional sign in its projective relation to the world." T 3.12. As Moore¹³ tells us, Wittgenstein conceived a proposition in this way (as a propositional sign in its projective relation to the world) to avoid the view that a proposition is a shadowy entity between the propositional sign and the situation it depicts.

The above discussion may give the impression that only elementary propositions are pictures of reality. The impression, unless understood with proper care, may be entirely misleading. No doubt, in the strict sense, only elementary propositions are pictures of the states of affairs. But as all other propositions can be analysed into elementary propositions, they, too, are pictures of possible situations. The only thing that must not be forgotten is that these molecular propositions depict something only indirectly, i.e., they are pictures of the possible situations only in virtue of the fact that their constituent

13. Moore, G.E., "Wittgenstein's Lectures, 1930-33" I, Mind, Jan. 1964, p. 13, (Philosophical Papers, p. 266).

elementary propositions do so. Wittgenstein says, "First and foremost, the elementary propositional form must portray; all portrayal takes place through it."¹⁴ Thus he is led to the doctrine that the truth-value of the non-elementary propositions depends on the truth-value of the constituent elementary propositions. This is in simple form his doctrine of truth-functions. Let us now examine this doctrine in detail.

We have seen that according to Wittgenstein the definite sense of a proposition is given only by analysis, and in the analysis we must arrive at elementary propositions. Thus the sense of a proposition can be stated completely by means of constituent elementary propositions and their connectives alone. Non-elementary propositions are molecular propositions, i.e., they are combinations of elementary propositions, combined by certain truth-functional connectives. It is Wittgenstein's firm belief that in the ultimate analysis we get only truth-functional connectives, other connectives are analysed away. Thus all molecular propositions are truth-functions of elementary propositions. Wittgenstein, then, makes it a general thesis and declares :

Propositions are truth-functions of elementary propositions.

(An elementary proposition is a truth-function of itself), T. 5.

This view of language is also known as the thesis of exten-

14. Notebooks, 31.10.14.

tionality. Every proposition must, according to this thesis, be either an elementary proposition or else a truth-function of such propositions. This thesis applies to, even, those propositions which are of complicated kind and do not seem to be truth-functions.

But what are precisely truth-functions and truth-functional connectives? When the truth or falsity of any proposition can be determined solely from the truth and falsity of its constituent elementary propositions (or proposition), it is called a truth-function of its constituent propositions (or proposition). For example, a molecular proposition ' $p \cdot q$ ' is a truth-function of p and q if its truth or falsity is determined by the truth-values of p and q . And a connective is a truth functional connective if it compounds propositions into truth-functions. On this definition 'and', 'or' and 'either/or' etc., are truth-functional connectives. The molecular proposition ' $p \cdot q$ ' is true if and only if p and q both are true; and false, if either p or q is false, or both p and q are false. Truth-functions which are true for all possibilities of truth and falsehood of their constituents are called tautologies. And truth-functions which are false for all possibilities of truth and falsehood of their constituents are called contradictions. Wittgenstein maintains that a tautology is the limit, says nothing, is senseless, and is not a picture of reality. It is called a proposition only by courtesy (cf 5.101, 4.461, 4.462, 4.463). Finally Wittgens-

tein identifies logical truths with tautologies (T 6.1). Consequently, according to this view, logical propositions say nothing (T 6.11), are purely formal (T 6.111), and their validity is determined solely by their symbolic expression (T 6.113). But they show the formal character of the language and the world (T 6.12). Although they are not about the objects of the world, they still 'show something about the world (T 6.124).

In logic the truth-functional connectives are used in a minimum sense. In ordinary discourse the connectives usually have a richer meaning. Another important point about truth-functional connectives is that Wittgenstein uses a single truth-functional connective in terms of which 'either/or', 'and' and any truth-functional connective can be defined. This single connective is Sheffer's 'neither/nor', symbolised by a stroke, '|'. The expression 'p|q' is read 'neither p nor q' or 'not-p and not-q'. 'p and q' and 'p or q' can be defined in terms of this stroke-function.

As I said above Wittgenstein applies his doctrine of truth-functions to the entire language. It appears at first sight that there are some propositions - universal propositions and propositions of the type 'I believe p' -- which are not truth-functions. But according to Wittgenstein even these propositions are truth-functions.

General propositions are the greatest stumbling

block. They are propositions expressed by means of the words 'all' and 'some'. Russell thought that general propositions could not be analysed into a truth-functional compound of elementary propositions. They must be recognised as stating a special kind of fact of their own.¹⁵ This is a reasonable type of argument but Wittgenstein does not accept it. According to Wittgenstein these propositions are, just as any other propositions, truth-functions of elementary propositions. General propositions are truth-functions expressing agreement and disagreement with the truth possibilities of elementary propositions. The general proposition, for example, 'Everything is A' can be analysed as an infinite conjunction of singular propositions 'This is A and that is A and'. Similarly, the existential proposition 'some thing is A' can be analysed as an infinite disjunction of singular propositions 'This is A or that is A or'. Thus, there is an identity, according to Wittgenstein, between the universal proposition and the truth-functional conjunction, and between the existential proposition and the truth-functional disjunction. Their difference from other molecular propositions lies merely in the way of the specification of their truth arguments. Instead of enumerating them as all the other molecular propositions do, the general propositions describe them by giving a function f_x , whose values for all values of x are

15. Russell, B., *Monist* articles, Lecture V.

the propositions to be described (T 5.501). Instead of containing all the names of the objects it is concerned with, the symbol of a general proposition contains only a variable standing for all its values at once. Wittgenstein, thus, maintains that general propositions like all other propositions are truth-functional compounds.

Next, we come to what are known as intentional propositions -- propositions of the type : 'A believes that p', 'A wishes that p', 'A thinks that p' etc. We have seen how Wittgenstein reconciles the nature of the general propositions. Now he wrestles with these propositions which seem to be exception to his thesis. At first sight, the proposition 'A believes p' appears by its form to be a truth-function of the proposition p, though it is not. The truth-value of the proposition is not determined by the truth-value of p. A may believe p to be true, when it is actually false. Hence it appears that a proposition (p) can occur in another ('A believes p') in a non-truth-functional way. If correct, it goes against Wittgenstein's thesis.

Wittgenstein tries to solve this difficult problem in a difficult passage (T 5.542). His solution is that the form of these propositions is illusory. He says :

But it is clear that "A believes that p"; "A thinks p"; "A says p" are of the form "p' says p"; and here we have no co-ordination of a fact and an object, but a co-ordination of facts by means of a coordination of their objects.

T 5.542.

Let us explain his solution by considering the proposition.

"A says p". When this proposition is fully analysed, it is easier to see that it is about A's making certain utterances "p" which express p. That is why Wittgenstein says that "A says p" is actually of the form ' "p" says p '. His point is that the apparent form of "A says p" is not its real form, and the real form does not contain the proposition p as a constituent.

Now we are in a position to discuss Wittgenstein's doctrine of extensionality more critically. We have seen that he is committed to the view that all propositions are truth-functions of elementary propositions. This is indeed an extraordinary thesis. Granted that certain propositions are results of truth-operations on elementary propositions, it does not mean that all propositions are produced in this way. Wittgenstein has not given any satisfactory proof to show that the entire language is truth-functional. We have already considered certain propositions which seem to contradict his thesis of truth-functions. Anscombe provides a
16
long list of similar cases :

Laws of inference, and, generally, logical truth, statements that one proposition implies another.
Generality -- i.e., propositions containing 'all' and 'some'.
Propositions giving logical classifications of terms and expressions -- e.g., ' "to the right of" is a relation, ' "a is to the right of b" is a proposition'.
Propositions that are important in the foundation of mathematics such as 'a is the successor of b'.
Statements about the possibility, impossibility, necessity, and certainty of particular states of affairs.

16. Anscombe, G.E.H., An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus, pp. 79-80.

Statements of identity.

Propositions apparently expressing functions of propositions, such as 'it is good that p ,' or ' p is possible', ' p is necessary' or again 'A believes p ' or 'A conceives p '; and perhaps even statements about, e.g., the beauty of pictures.

Propositions stating probabilities.

Propositions of mathematics.

Propositions stating laws of nature.

Propositions about space and time.

Egocentric propositions.

Propositions about the world as a whole, about God and the meaning of life.

Wittgenstein may say that most of the propositions given above are not genuine propositions at all. They are meaningless or non-sensical. Some of them try to say something which cannot be said. Some of them are only degenerate cases. And the others are really truth-functions of elementary propositions, though their apparent forms conceal their real forms. But it is very difficult to maintain that all molecular propositions are truth-functional compounds. Generally propositions are combined in such a way that they express order, reason, togetherness etc. One of Wittgenstein's early followers writes :

I do not say that all compound sentences are logical constructions out of simple sentences. I am inclined to think, "He fell because he laughed" is not.

We come to the most serious difficulty which knocked both Logical Atomism and Logical Positivism out of bottom. The truth-functional doctrine of language inevitably leads to reductive analysis. It implies that there cannot be

17. Wisdom, J., 'Logical Constructions', Mind, 1931, p. 471, note.

complex propositions in the ultimate analysis. Language is analysable into elementary propositions (or basic propositions), and it must be truth-functional if it is to be analysed into elementary or basic propositions. The propositions about complex-objects are analysable into elementary propositions, which reveal the structure of the reality. It must be said in fairness that there was no consensus of opinion on this matter. Logical positivists tried to analyse the material object statements into statements about sense-data. The basic propositions, in their opinion, record the directly given experience. But both logical atomists and logical positivists ^{accepted} the thesis of extensionality. For both logical atomists and logical positivists the important task was to show that the reductive analysis was possible whatever difficulty it may imply in actual practice. They were so convinced of this possibility that no difficulty could deter them from their a priori programme. It was Wittgenstein who, in his later works, recognised the major trouble about the possibility of the reductive analysis (and the thesis of extensionality).

The fundamental difficulty, as Wittgenstein and his followers point out, consists in the assumption that the analysis has the same meaning as the analysandum. It is certainly a wrong assumption and only a good deal of philosophical conditioning could make it acceptable.

The practitioners of reductive analysis tried to analyse the statements about objects persons, nations etc.,

in terms of their simple constituents. But do the fully analysed propositions say the something which is conveyed by the original proposition? To answer this, let us take an example. It is said that nations are logical constructions out of people. It means that any statement about a nation can be analysed in terms of the statements about its people. But is it so? Can we analyse the proposition 'England declared war in 1939' in terms of the English citizens? It obviously is not an enumeration of what every Englishman did in 1939. "....We cannot analyse nation statements", says Urson, "into statements about people, and therefore we cannot say that England or any other nation is a logical construction out of people."¹⁸ Similar is the case with other propositions of ordinary language. There is no equivalence between the analysis and the analysandum. If this is true then a language (at least the language which we use in daily discourse) cannot be conceived as a clear cut truth-functional structure based on elementary propositions. "The view of philosophy as having its task in the reductive analysis of the puzzling statements of our ordinary every-day language to the simple atomic reports of immediate experience had to be abandoned. This could not be the way to reveal either the structure of the world or the structure of our language."¹⁹ Thus, with the failure of reductive analysis the extensionality thesis of language also crumbles down.

¹⁸. Urson, J.O., Philosophical Analysis, p. 152.

¹⁹. Ibid., p. 160.

Here we have another confirmation of our conclusion that analysis is the major villain of the piece.

This conclusion illuminates well our final point. Wittgenstein did not arrive at the truth-functional view of language by examining the different functions of words. The truth is that he developed a particular theory of meaning, which implied the view that propositions are truth-functions of elementary propositions. This particular theory of meaning is Wittgenstein's picture theory. "Indeed, we should not regard Wittgenstein's theory of the proposition as a synthesis of a picture theory and the theory of truth-functions; his picture theory and theory of truth-functions are one and the same." Let us then examine the picture theory of meaning a bit critically.

I shall discuss presently a single but most important aspect of the picture theory, viz., the elementary proposition and how it depicts. Another problem is how propositions of ordinary language picture reality which I shall deal with a little later.

Elementary propositions, as we have seen, have the following features. They consist entirely of names, and each name designates a simple object. They contain no logical constants. They are logically independent of one another. They assert the existence of atomic states of affairs. They

20. Anscombe, G.E.H., An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus, p. 61.

do so by picturing the corresponding facts, actual or possible. Now the problem is : is it correct to say that elementary propositions are pictures of the corresponding states of affairs?

The essential feature of the picture-theory is that there must be a structural similarity between a proposition and the fact it depicts. But, it does not mean, as some of Wittgenstein's interpreters think, that by picture he meant something which looked like the original. A proposition cannot be a coloured photograph of the state of affairs it depicts. Wittgenstein never maintained it. Hence all the criticisms directed against this point, are definitely wide of the mark.²¹ What is essential for picturing is ^aone-to-one correspondence between the elements of a picture and those of the pictured-fact, and a common pictorial form or form of depiction.

Ayle understood the picture-theory correctly when he rejected it in his 'Systematically Misleading Expressions'. "I cannot myself credit what seems to be the doctrine of Wittgenstein and the school of logical grammarians who owe allegiance to him, that what makes an expression formally proper to a fact is some real and non-conventional one-one picturing relation between the composition of the expression and that of the fact. For I do not see how a fact or state of affairs can be deemed like or even unlike in structure a

²¹. This line of criticism is followed by Ayer (among others) in his 'Verification and Experience', PAS, 1936-37.

sentence, gesture or diagram. For a fact is not like a collection - even an arranged collection - of bits in the way in which a sentence is an arranged collection of noises or a map an arranged collection of scratches.²² Hyle makes here an excellent point. A fact cannot be conceived as an arrangement of objects. It is questionable whether the term 'fact' can be retained. Most of the philosophers, to-day, believe that it is expendable, that 'fact' denotes no extra-linguistic entities which are in the world. But even those who accept that in certain primary uses 'fact' means 'phenomena, events, situations, states of affairs' etc.,²³ find themselves unable to digest the view that facts are combinations of objects. It is definitely a mistake to require an identity of structure between propositions and states of affairs. Moreover, it is not quite clear, what is meant by the form of a fact. Is it not that we are reading into the fact what is to be found in the language? Is it not like imposing the structure of the telescope on the world we see through it?

Let us inquire, briefly, how this type of thinking develops. It is a natural temptation to maintain that a proposition is true when there is a fact corresponding to it. So far as the nature of truth is concerned, most of the philosophers accept this correspondence theory of truth.

22. Hyle, G., 'Systematically Misleading Expressions', *PAS*, 1931-32, reprinted in *Logic and Language*, I.
 23. Austin, J.L., 'Unfair to facts', *Philosophical Papers*, p. 104.

And in itself, there is nothing wrong about it. But when interpreted philosophically, it can be misleading. It may lead one to think that for every true proposition there exists 'one' and its own precisely corresponding fact, so that there is a one-to-one correspondence between the proposition and the fact. It may be accepted that the fact-stating propositions are made true by the facts they represent. But it does not imply the so-called isomorphic relation between a language and the world. In the words of Austin, "There is no need whatsoever for the words used in making a true statement to 'mirror' in any way, however indirect, any feature whatsoever of the situation or event; a statement no more needs, in order to be true, to reproduce the 'multiplicity', say, or the 'structure' or 'form' of the reality, than a word needs to be echoic or writing pictographic. To suppose that it does, is to fall once again into the error of reading back into the world the features of language."²⁴

A sympathetic student of Wittgenstein's philosophy may take the plea that Wittgenstein is not concerned with the facts as they are understood in the ordinary sense. He conceives them in a strictly technical sense. Facts are, in his technical sense, combinations of objects (T 2.01), and objects are simples (T 2.02). Similarly he defines an elementary proposition as a concatenation of names (T 4.22), and names mean simple objects (T 3.203). Whether

24. Austin, J.L., 'Truth' Philosophical Papers, p.93.

this view of facts and propositions is correct or not, it definitely makes the above criticisms untenable. Once you think like Wittgenstein, once this view is granted, it becomes quite tempting to maintain that propositions are pictures of facts. It would not do, then, to say that facts are not collections of things, or that 'fact' is superfluous. No external criticism can seriously damage the theory so far as it is self-consistent. At most we can only reject it.

Let us, then, take Wittgenstein's views for granted. Suppose that a fact is a combination of objects; that an elementary proposition is a concatenation of names; and that the latter is the picture of the former. But is this view free from all the troubles? How can we understand the sense of the elementary propositions? How are the elementary propositions to be written? To start with the last question, an atomic fact is, as Wittgenstein says, a combination of objects. An elementary proposition is, then, a concatenation of names of these objects. It contains only the names of these particulars. Relations and properties go over into the structure. The arrangement displays the character of the relations. A relation of objects is expressed by a relation of their names. But the main problem is : how can the different relations of a particular number of objects be expressed by the concatenation of the same number of names? Suppose (a) 'a-b' says that a loves b and (b) 'b-a' says that b loves a. How can we symbolise other

relations, such as, (c) a hates b, (d) b hates a, (e) a fears b, (f) b fears a, and many others? ²⁵ It is possible that these two particulars might be configurable in any number of different ways. And we must be able to express all these possible modes of configuration. But it seems to be impossible. Cegi and Anscombe try to find a way out of this impasse. They say that this difficulty arises only when we follow the straight-line notation. If we limit ourselves to just this one-directional structure of the propositions we cannot represent all the possible modes of configuration for a given number of objects. But this limitation is untenable. It is not necessary for the propositions to have a straight line structure. In fact they can and must be written in many directions. "Once it is understood that the picturing relation need not be the same as the relation pictured, it is easy to see how the picture theory of meaning can apply to relational propositions in general. Any relation of objects, spatial or non-spatial, can be represented by a spatial relation of the names of those objects. That a has relation R to b can be represented by writing 'a' some specified distance and direction from 'b', and that a has some different relation R₁ to b can be presented by writing 'a' some different distance and direction from 'b'." We can now represent our examples in the

25. Note : These examples are taken for the sake of exposition. In the strict sense they are not atomic facts.

following way :

(a) "a b"

(b) "b a"

(c) "a

b"

(d) "b

a"

(e) "a

b"

(f) "b

a", and so on.

It means that really pictorial propositions are not necessarily linear. One may take a step further and maintain that they are never linear.

It is not my purpose here to examine the validity of this interpretation. Perhaps there is no direct evidence either in its favour or against it. But it has a good point in that it is more 'perspicuous' than its rival. But it has two major difficulties. First, if this is the correct way of writing propositions, it violates the conventions of the languages we use. The sentences of the languages we use are linear-structures. They are not maps of the facts they describe. This interpretation, thus, "concedes that the picture-theory is inconsistent with a characteristic feature of language."²⁷ Maps are, no doubt, perspicuous representations. We find in a map or a diagram an ideal case of a one-to-one correspondence between a picture and the situation depicted. But the essential difference between a map and a proposition is that while the former is two-dimensional, the latter is one-dimensional.

27. Hoyt, D., "Picture Theory of Language", The Philosophical Review, Oct., 1964, p. 303.

Wittgenstein describes propositions as pictures. But a proposition may be a picture of a situation without being a two-dimensional structure. We are in a dilemma : if the propositions are one-dimensional structures, they cannot express all the possible modes of configuration of a given number of objects; if, on the other hand, they are two-dimensional structures, then they cease to be linguistic propositions and become maps. Both the alternatives are equally damaging. If we accept the first, it makes language poorer; and if we accept the second, it makes the picture theory inconsistent with the general nature of language.

Secondly, granted that propositions are two-dimensional structures, our problem, now, is : how can we understand the sense of a given proposition? We have already seen that according to Wittgenstein a proposition should be able to communicate a new sense to us (T 4.027). If we know the names of the proposition, we can understand its sense at once, without any previous acquaintance with it, without its sense being explained to us. Simply by looking at a proposition, I can understand what situation it depicts. This is possible because the propositions are the pictures of the states of affairs. If I know the objects denoted by the names of a proposition, then I can understand the configuration of these objects represented by the proposition. But, this view, as Pitcher points out, depends on an unwarranted assumption. The assumption is that, in all possible states of affairs, objects are configured only

spatially, i.e., that all possible states of affairs are purely spatial arrangements of objects. In that case, the spatial arrangement of the names in the proposition might conceivably be a picture of the spatial arrangement of the objects in the state of affairs.²⁸ It is very difficult to maintain that all sorts of states of affairs are only spatial arrangements of objects. However, Wittgenstein makes no attempt to prove it. And there seems no reason to believe that this might be so. It means the picture theory rests on an assumption which has not been proved. Wittgenstein's picture theory is, then, indefensible.

It may be said that Anscombe and Copi have not interpreted the Tractatus correctly. Wittgenstein does not write elementary propositions in two-dimensional structures. Rather, he chooses the straight-line notation. To quote his own words :

Names are the simple symbols : I indicate them by single letters ('x', 'y', 'z').

I write elementary propositions as functions of names, so that they have the form 'fx', ' (x,y)', etc
T 4.34.

The same point is made in T 3.1432 where Wittgenstein writes the propositional sign "axb" in a straight line. There is also an additional advantage in writing an elementary proposition in the linear or one-dimensional structure. As
²⁹Anscombe correctly points out, the relation-sign "R" may

28. Fitcher, G., The Philosophy of Wittgenstein, p.129.
29. Anscombe, G.E.H., An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus, pp. 88-102.

conceal many other names which are not explicitly mentioned in the propositional sign and which will be revealed in the completely analysed propositions. The proposition "fx" may conceal infinitely many names. Thus while the two dimensional notation would have to use all the x names, the straight-line notation might need only a few signs.

But the great stumbling block in this interpretation is the objection, which I have already mentioned, that a linear concatenation of names cannot represent all possible configurations of a given number of objects. A possible solution may be that an elementary proposition contains not only the names of the objects but also the relation-sign. By changing the arrangement of the names and the relation-sign, one can express all possible configurations of a given number of objects by the propositions of the linear-structures. We can, for example, represent different configurations of three objects in the following way : " $R(x,y,z)$ ", " $S(x,y,z)$ ", " $T(x,y,z)$ " etc. But an important point to be remembered is that the relation-signs are not to be counted as components of the propositions. The relation-signs function differently from the names. While names stand for objects, relation-signs denote nothing. They indicate only how the proposition is to be understood. Their function is simply to indicate the relationship obtaining among the objects configured. Thus by changing the relation-sign a linear proposition can express a new state of affairs. In this way linear propositions can meet both requirements --

the one-to-one correspondence between the proposition and the state of affair, and the possibility of representing all possible configurations of a given number of objects.

Is this interpretation free from all troubles? Unfortunately it is not. On this interpretation even a fully analysed elementary proposition would contain one sign more in addition to the names of the objects configured in a state of affair. The view that a fully analysed elementary proposition contains a relation-sign is inconsistent with Wittgenstein's doctrine that an elementary proposition consists entirely of names. Wittgenstein writes in T 4.22 that "an elementary proposition consists of names. It is a nexus, a concatenation, of names." This passage makes it clear that elementary propositions cannot contain relation-signs. They consist of names alone. If so, elementary propositions of linear structures cannot represent all possible situations.

In conclusion, I want to point out that Wittgenstein's picture theory is indefensible. This follows not only from the linguistic considerations discussed above, but also from the ontological considerations. Even if we grant the view that elementary propositions are representational pictures of states of affairs, we cannot compare a proposition with the fact it pictures, unless names are directly nailed to objects. But, as we have seen in our analysis of the nature of objects, it is a requirement which cannot be

fulfilled. If an object is to be named it must be observable; but if it is observable, then it is not simple. There seems no way out of this paradox. There is no doubt that the Tractatus account of propositions is wrong. As Anscombe says, "This is partly because one cannot believe in the simple objects required by the theory"³⁰. Wittgenstein failed to understand the functioning of language. He underestimated the conventional character of language, and wrongly assumed that propositions have some fixed form which they share with reality, and which can be revealed only by analysis. There can be no doubt whatsoever, that analysis proved to be the major villain of the piece. But in fairness to Wittgenstein it must be said that the picture theory is as compelling as it is difficult to defend. Anyone, who has been obsessed by the 'transcendental' character of logic and language, can easily realise its compelling force. Its weak points are revealed only when its doctrines are traced to their conclusions, which the young Wittgenstein refused to do on the plea that it concerned the field of empirical investigation.

An important facet of the picture theory is concerned with its application to ordinary language. Hailed as the propounder of contemporary analytic philosophy, Wittgenstein's work has been systematically misinterpreted. Wittgenstein, as we have seen in the previous chapter, started his philo-

30. Anscombe - "An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus," p. 77.

sophical career with his interest in the 'essence' of logic which led him to the pursuit of the essence of language. It is illuminating to see how his interest in the ideography (Begriffsschrift) or ideal language has been misunderstood. He demands an ideography which will reflect the logical form clearly, which ordinary language being ambiguous cannot do. This criticism has led some able interpreters to think that Wittgenstein wished to replace ordinary language by an artificially constructed perfect or ideal language. Such a language will perfectly obey the logical syntax. It is only this artificial language, they say, that pictures atomic states of affairs, propositions of ordinary language cannot. Elementary propositions which are pictures of atomic states of affairs can occur only in an ideal language. Wittgenstein is concerned with the construction of such a logically perfect language which is truth-functional and contains only perspicuous propositions. Ambiguous propositions cannot occur in it. Ordinary language which fails to picture facts should be replaced by this logically perfect language. The picture theory of language, in short, applies only to a logically perfect language. Ordinary language can express meaningful propositions only if it conforms to this ideal. Ordinary language, therefore, should be purged and brought into conformity with a logically perfect language. This assessment of the Tractarian philosophy has generated a myth that there is nothing common between the earlier and the later Wittgenstein. The myth goes on to tell us that

the earlier Wittgenstein was concerned exclusively with a logically perfect language, while the later Wittgenstein correctly realizes the importance of ordinary language. But I shall try to show that there is much in common between the *Tractatus* and the *Philosophical Investigations*. Rather their central problem is the same, viz., to understand the real structure of ordinary language. The main problem in both the works is to understand how language conveys sense. The misinterpretation supporting this myth was initiated by Russell. His Introduction which is good in many respects, contains a serious error in interpreting the purpose of ideography or sign -- language. He says, "In order to understand Mr. Wittgenstein's book, it is necessary to realise what is the problem with which he is concerned. In the part of his theory which deals with symbolism he is concerned with the conditions which would have to be fulfilled by a logically perfect language."³¹ Wisdom, and Copi also subscribe to this view of Russell : "Wittgenstein says that sentences picture facts. But hardly any sentences in ordinary language do picture facts. Wittgenstein does not wish to assert that they do. He is trying to point out an ideal to which some sentences try to attain."³² "The tendency to reject ordinary language seems to me to predominate. Wittgenstein was concerned with the construction of "an adequate notation."³³

31. *Tractatus Logico - Philosophicus*, p. 7.

32. Wisdom, J., "Logical Constructions", *Mind*, 1931, p. 202.

33. Copi, I.M., "Objects Properties and Relations in *Tractatus*", *Mind*, 1958, pp. 146.

This interpretation is based, primarily, on Wittgenstein's certain remarks³⁴ about ordinary language. In the *Tractatus* he, no doubt, criticizes ordinary language. According to Wittgenstein, there are mainly two types of confusions generated by ordinary language. First, ordinary language can use the same sign in different symbols, i.e., it can use the same sign to stand for different symbols (T 3.323). To illustrate this type of error we can mention 'is' which is used in ordinary language as a copula, as a sign of equality and as a sign of existence. In these cases 'is' is used in three different symbols. Secondly, two words which signify in different ways, are employed in propositions in what is superficially the same way (T 3.323). Examples of this error are the sort discussed in Kyle's 'Systematically Misleading Expressions'. Words which play different logical parts are treated as analogous because they seem to be used alike in the sentences in which they occur. That is to say, superficial linguistic similarities blur the underlying differences of logical form (T 4.002). We use 'Alexander' and 'the present King of France' in such a similar way in ordinary language that it looks as if they are of the same form. They are used as grammatical subjects, which misleads one to think that they are both names, and have meaning only by standing for something.

34. T 3.321, 3.324, 4.002 (b-d), 4.003.

Wittgenstein's purpose of introducing ideography is simply to avoid these mistakes. We can avoid these errors, he says, by reforming our symbolism -- by not applying the same sign in different symbols, and by not applying signs in the same way which signify in different ways (T 3.325). Once we have a sign-language in which everything is all right, we already have a correct logical point of view. Thus the function of a sign-language or ideography is not to replace ordinary language, but to make the forms of ordinary language perspicuous. Wittgenstein has said at many places that ordinary language is quite free from logical defects. There is a perfect logical order in the propositions of ordinary language just as they stand. He writes :

All propositions of our colloquial language are actually, just as they are, logically completely in order..... T 5.5563(a).

It is simply unjust to brush aside this remark. Those who emphasize on a perfect language do so because they fail to realize its importance. Wittgenstein is concerned not with the conditions of any perfect language, but with all significant languages. For him, the primary question is: How is it possible for a proposition (even of ordinary language) to have a sense? His answer, in short, is that it must be a picture of a state of affairs directly or indirectly. Propositions of ordinary language can be significant if, and only if, they are truth-functional compounds of elementary propositions which depict atomic states of affairs. Complex

propositions must be capable of being analysed into elementary propositions. Elementary propositions are thus logical demands of all significant languages. The existence of elementary propositions is a logical requirement for the possibility of meaningful discourse. The fact that we can understand propositions of ordinary language, that we can determine their truth or falsity, proves that there must be elementary propositions into which they can be analysed. To say that elementary propositions occur only in a perfect language amounts to saying that propositions of ordinary language are meaningless. Wittgenstein not only does not subscribe to this view, he rather maintains that ordinary language is logically all right. As Anscombe says, "Language could not approximate to having meaning; any language, just qua language, fulfils its purpose perfectly."³⁵ Propositions of ordinary language do not fail to express a sense. They express it perfectly.

It is thus certainly wrong to say that Wittgenstein's picture theory does not fit ordinary propositions. No doubt an unanalysed proposition of ordinary language is not a perspicuous picture, but it is made up of elementary propositions which are direct pictures of corresponding atomic states of affairs. When a proposition of ordinary language is fully analysed, it reveals such fact-depicting elementary propositions. It is clear then, that elementary propositions are not propositions of an artificial and logically perfect

35. Anscombe, G.E.H., *An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus*, p. 31.

language. They are, rather, what ordinary propositions can be analysed into. In the words of Griffin, "He is giving the specifications of elementary sentences, sentences underlying languages in general and so underlying ordinary language."³⁶

What is, then, the sign-language? And what is its purpose? Wittgenstein, as we have seen, makes frequent references to an "adequate notation" (T 6.122), "a symbolism which obeys the rules of logical grammar" (T 3.326). But a language whose symbolism obeys the rules of logical grammar and which is explicitly truth-functional is not conceived by Wittgenstein to be a perfect language which is to replace ordinary language. Its aim is only to show clearly how any language works. It is only a device to correct the misleading features of ordinary language. Although ordinary language expresses its sense well, it fails to express it perspicuously. Wittgenstein says :

Colloquial language is a part of the human organism and is not less complicated than it.

From it, it is humanly impossible to gather immediately the logic of language.

Language disguises the thought; so that from the external form of the clothes one cannot infer the form of the thought they clothe, because the external form of the clothes is constructed with quite another object than to let the form of the body be recognised. T 4.002 (b-d).

The last sentence makes it obvious that the purpose

36. Griffin, J., Wittgenstein's Logical Atomism, p. 146.

of an ideal language is simply to make the form of the body be recognized, i.e., to make it perspicuous. Hence,³⁷ following Sellars and Bernstein, we shall call such a language 'perspicuous', "for the purpose of this language is to show perspicuously what is 'hidden'.³⁸" A perspicuous language exhibits the skeleton of ordinary language. It reveals the real form of propositions which is disguised by grammatical similarities. It is devised to cure the obscurities of ordinary language on which philosophy thrives. Thus a perspicuous language is an ideal language, only in the sense that in it there is no possibility of making a mistake. Its aim is not to replace ordinary language, but simply to reveal its real form perspicuously. In the words of James Griffin, "An ideal language is ideal, for Wittgenstein, because it makes clear features which are obscure in ordinary language, but the features that are being made clear, one should note, are the features of ordinary language. The features, the essentials, are precisely what is common to both."³⁹ It is now clear that Wittgenstein talks of both ordinary language and perspicuous language. The latter is not to replace the former. It is simply an aid for understanding how a language works. It is by the possession of a logical form that a proposition is capable of expressing a sense. But it is impossible to discern the logical form in the pre-

37. Sellars, W., "Naming and Saying" *Philosophy of Science*, Vol. 29, Jan. 1962, pp. 7-26.

38. Bernstein, R.J., "Wittgenstein's Three Languages" *ibid.*, Dec. 1961, p. 283.

39. Griffin, J., *Wittgenstein's Logical Atomism*, p. 140.

positions of ordinary language. It is, therefore, essential to translate it into the propositions of a perspicuous language. As it is humanly impossible to gather the logic of language from it directly (T 4.002), Wittgenstein proposes to construct logical symbolisms. A perspicuous language is required to understand the "logic of language", and to see how a language mirrors reality.

We can now discuss the view that the later Wittgenstein has practically nothing to do with the doctrines he propounded so forcefully and passionately in the *Tractatus*. There are, no doubt, great differences between the doctrines of the *Tractatus* and those of the *Philosophical Investigations*, but a careful study will show that there is much in common between the two works. Not only this, the central problem, as I see it, is the same in both the works. To put in short, the fundamental theses which are maintained in these books are the following.

The main purpose of both the works, is to understand how ordinary language works. Wittgenstein maintains in the *Tractatus* that ordinary language is logically well (T 5.5563). There are many similar remarks in the *Notebooks*. At one place while discussing the conventions of our language, he says, "I only want to justify the vagueness of ordinary sentences, for it can be justified."⁴⁰ It is, thus, a gross mis-

40. *Notebooks*, 26.6, 13(a).

understanding to say that the later Wittgenstein justifies ordinary language while the earlier Wittgenstein is concerned with the conditions of a logically perfect language. As we have seen previously, an ideal language is not a new language, but only a pragmatic device to show perspicuously how ordinary language functions, how it is able to say something true or false.

Secondly, Wittgenstein maintains both in the *Tractatus* and the *Philosophical Investigations* that ordinary language⁴¹ is actually ambiguous and confusing. He also maintains that the deepest problems of philosophy are rooted in the misunderstanding of the logic of our language.⁴² The only cure of philosophical confusions is to understand the language properly. Thus philosophy is not a science, nor a new theory,⁴³ but an analysis of language. Most of the philosophical problems are only pseudo problems. They are simply nonsensical. According to Wittgenstein philosophy has to remove the puzzlement caused by linguistic confusions. They can be dissolved by understanding the language we use to clothe these problems.

The differences, as I said, are great and of capital importance. I shall discuss here only the main difference which leads to others. Wittgenstein subscribes to the view that the genuine philosophizing consists in understanding the

41. T 4.002, T 4.002, PI, Sec. 110, BB, p. 49.

42. T 4.003, PI, Sec. 11, 12, 110, BB, p. 49.

43. T 4.0031, 3.111, 4.112, PI, Sec. 109.

logic of our language. But the two books differ greatly in the method of analysis. Wittgenstein maintains in the *Tractatus*, that ordinary language is truth-functional, and we can understand its real form by constructing a perspicuous language. But the later Wittgenstein ridicules this sublime view of language. He maintains in his later works that it is a superstition to believe that ordinary language follows exact rules. The fact is that most of our words do not have a perfectly precise meaning, they have no sharp boundaries. Philosophers who are under the spell of exactness of sense, look for exact rules, and when they fail to find them in ordinary language, they invent an artificial symbolism, perhaps thinking that it reveals the real forms of language. As Wittgenstein says, "the crystalline purity of logic was, of course, not a result of investigation; it was a requirement." (PI, Sec. 107). The proper way of philosophising consists in describing the actual use of words. He rejects the "one-and-only-one-use" prejudice of the *Tractatus*, and realises that words have many different uses. Now his view is that certain features of ordinary language are misleading but it is no cure to construct sign-languages. What we must do, on the other hand, is to understand the workings of our ordinary language- we must look at the actual use of words. His new slogan is: Don't think but look (PI, Sec. 66). Philosophical problems arise, he says in the *Philosophical Investigations*, when language goes on holiday (PI, Sec. 138), i.e., when words are considered in abstraction, when they become an object of philosophical speculation. Language is

a form of life and has many different jobs to perform; there is no single rule to cover them all.

Wittgenstein's theory of propositions has some important and far-reaching consequences. I shall consider only two, viz., the view of significant language, and the nature of philosophy.

According to Wittgenstein, all propositions are truth-functions of elementary propositions. Consequently, there can be only three types of propositions : tautologies, contradictions and descriptive propositions. Tautologies and contradictions say nothing. Wittgenstein maintains that propositions of logic are tautologies (T 6.1), say nothing (T 6.11), are purely formal (T 6.111) and can be certified by exclusive attention to symbols in abstraction from meaning (T 6.113). But they are of capital importance in the sense that their independence of what is the case, does not prevent them from manifesting logical features of the world (T 6.12a). He claims in T 6.124(a), that the 'scaffolding' of the world is the same as the logical form of the world. Logic exhibits this scaffolding. This common form is revealed, according to Wittgenstein, in the tautological propositions of language. Similarly propositions of mathematics are equations (not tautologies), and say nothing (T 6.31). But mathematics also, like logic, shows the 'logic of the world' (T 6.32). Propositions of both logic and mathematics are senseless (sinnlos), but not nonsensical (unsinnig). When we consider the sense of a sentence, three

possibilities arise : (a) it may have a sense, i.e., it may be significant (sinnvoll); (b) it may lack a sense, be senseless (sinnlos), or (c) it may be 'nonsensical' (unsinnig). Wittgenstein thus makes a distinction between senseless and nonsensical propositions. Mathematics and logic consist of senseless propositions; all empirical propositions are significant and the rest is nonsensical.

Thus only those propositions are significant which depict actual or possible states of affairs. Only descriptive propositions have a sense. And all such propositions are empirical. What they can say implicitly or explicitly (in ordinary and perspicuous languages respectively), is that certain states of affairs exist or do not exist. Nothing else can be said significantly. All significant languages are, thus, limited to statements about states of affairs. Similarly all thought is limited to states of affairs. Wittgenstein says at T 4 "A thought is a proposition with a sense". Thus the limits of language and thought are the same. It means, language and thought are limited to states of affairs. This is why Wittgenstein says :

The totality of true propositions is the whole of natural science T 3.11.

The correct method in philosophy would really be the following : to say nothing except what can be said, i.e., propositions of natural science-- i.e., something that has nothing to do with philosophy. T 6.53.

Since propositions can describe only states of affairs and the totality of propositions is language (T 4.001), whatever

else is said (leaving tautologies and contradictions) is nonsense. Whatever can be said at all, can be said clearly. And it is better to remain silent than to talk nonsense (T, p.27). One should not try to say what cannot be said. When it is done we get only a pseudo philosophy. "Most of the propositions and questions to be found in philosophical works are not false but nonsensical. Most of the propositions and questions of philosophers arise from our failure to understand the logic of our language." T 4.003 (a).

Let us then see, in brief, what a significant language cannot say. To begin with, we cannot talk about things (metaphysical entities), soul, God etc. Next we cannot describe the logical form of a state of affairs. It only shows itself in the symbolism (T 4.121 a). What expresses itself in language, we cannot express by means of language (T 4.121 c). What can be shown cannot be said (T 4.1212). Finally, propositions cannot represent anything higher (T 6.42). Ethics and aesthetics are transcendental (T 6.421). As a matter of fact nothing but what is a state of affairs can be said. We cannot discuss the relation between language and the world. In short, there are many things which cannot be said. But if so, Wittgenstein has no right to write a book on philosophy in which he talks about the world, object, fact, name, proposition, truth-function, logic, mathematics, etc. Any talk about these is nonsensical. Wittgenstein has the courage to face the consequences. He declares in

the end of his book :

My propositions are elucidatory in this way: he who understands me finally recognizes them as senseless, when he has climbed out through them, on them, over them. T 6.54(a).

Is, then, the *Tractatus* self-defeating? If the *Tractatus* contains nonsensical sentences, then even its conclusions are nonsensical. Even the conclusion that all that preceded was nonsense, must itself be viewed as nonsensical. We cannot even say, "whereof one cannot say thereof one must be silent" (T 7). It is already a violation of silence, a flagrant contradiction of the rule. This is why Ramsey said, "what we can't say we can't say, and we cannot whistle it either."⁴⁴

One immediately feels uneasy with this position, which is a sufficient ground for doubting its validity. Wittgenstein failed to realize that what can be understood can be said. He said certain things about the relationship between language and the world, about their structure etc. one understands these doctrines, and either accepts or rejects them. It is wrong to say, then, that they cannot be said. Before we comment further, it is useful to understand Wittgenstein's notion of 'nonsense'. He has not used it in the ordinary sense. By 'nonsense' he does not mean sheer nonsense, gibberish, unintelligible absurdities. 'Non-sense' is a highly technical term in his philosophy.

44. Ramsey, F.P., 'General Propositions and Causality', reprinted in *The Foundations of Mathematics*, 1991, p. 238.

A significant language, according to Wittgenstein, consists of propositions which are pictures of possible states of affairs. Every significant language is a depicting-language. Consequently any sentence which is non-depicting is non-sensical. Since the Tractatus is written in a non-depicting-language its propositions are nonsensical. But it is elucidatory (T6.54), as it tells us about the conditions of any significant language; and "makes sense in its own fashion."⁴⁵ The language in which the Tractatus has been written may conveniently be called 'elucidatory language'.⁴⁶ This elucidatory language is important as a device to illuminate the nature of significant languages. It is employed as a type of meta-language. An elucidatory language only elucidates, it does not describe states of affairs. Its propositions cannot occur in depicting languages. They do not picture. But picturing is something that we can elucidate only in an elucidatory language. Thus it is possible to defend Wittgenstein's thesis by distinguishing the elucidatory language used in the Tractatus from the depicting languages. This language is nonsensical because it does not consist of empirical statements. But it has its own importance. The ladder must be used before it is thrown away.

But before we accept the validity of this defence it is necessary to consider the following points :

45. Black, N., A Companion to Wittgenstein's Tractatus, p. 380.

46. Sellars calls it 'ladder language' in his paper 'Naming and Saying'; published in 'Philosophy of Language', Jan. 1962.

First of all, Wittgenstein's conception of language does not seem to favour the possibility of any elucidatory language of the type of meta-language. He maintains that language is the totality of propositions (T 4.001). He also says that a thought is a proposition with a sense (T4). It means that both thought and language are confined to empirical sentences (leaving tautologies). As the sense of a proposition is the situation it describes, the sentences which do not represent situations are either senseless (in case of logic and mathematics) or nonsensical. Thus a significant language consists entirely of the propositions of natural sciences. All significant languages are, according to Wittgenstein, depicting languages. Hence there is no possibility of any elucidatory language.

Secondly, we may grant the possibility of an elucidatory language. But it is required only if the picture theory of meaning is accepted. We have already seen that this theory is untenable. As the later Wittgenstein realizes, the use of language is not confined to stating facts. To understand the nature and function of language one must observe its use in ordinary discourse. There is no model, no paradigm, to determine a priori the criterion of meaning. As a matter of fact there is no single criterion.

The fact that we can talk intelligibly about objects, facts, names, propositions, world etc., shows that these things can be said; and the language which is used to say them is significant. It is rendered nonsensical only if

a particular use of language is taken to determine its sense. It is no doubt an important function of any language to state facts, but it cannot replace other significant uses. No particular use can serve as the paradigm of the whole language. It is a picture that held Wittgenstein captive. It is now generally accepted that the picture theory of meaning is untenable. With the rejection of the picture theory the Tractarian concept of 'nonsensicality' is gone. There is, then, no need of elucidation. However, we must appreciate Wittgenstein's honesty and boldness. If the picture theory is correct, then all other functions of language are certainly nonsensical. It was an uneasy situation, and his immediate followers rebelled against it.

The next important consequence is concerned with Wittgenstein's concept of philosophy. His views on philosophy are contained in T 4.003, 4.0031, 4.111, 4.112, 4.1121, 4.1122, 4.113, 4.114, 4.115, 6.53, 6.54 and 7. Wittgenstein departs significantly from the traditional views on the nature and function of philosophy. Although there is no unanimity about the nature of philosophy among the traditional philosophers, yet they all believe that it is a body of knowledge, a search for wisdom. In their opinion the philosophical knowledge consists in revealing the ultimate nature of truth and reality. Some philosophers identified the philosophical activity with the psychological analysis of the powers and limits of knowing. Their attempt has been

mainly to establish the limitation of human knowledge through the study of mental faculties. Still others, particularly Kant, confined their activities to epistemological problems involved in a scientific construction of experience. Finally, some recent philosophers who were very much impressed by the tremendous advancement of sciences, pleaded for the scientific methods to study the special domain of philosophy. In all these concepts of philosophy, two distinguishable and independent factors were confused, two separate activities were mixed up : the search for truth or nature of the universe (reality), and the clarification of the concepts that we employ to explain our knowledge of truth and reality. The first activity constitutes a body of knowledge, but the second is only a pursuit of meaning and sense. As the search for wisdom includes both, the traditional philosophy has often confused the two. Credit goes to Wittgenstein to keep them separate. According to him the first activity is the business of the scientists; only the second one is the proper field of the philosophers. The search after facts and truths is the job of the scientists. Philosophers must confine their activity to clarification of sense and meaning. Philosophy is not a body of knowledge, not a set of propositions; but 'Critique of language' (T 4.0031).

Thus philosophy, according to Wittgenstein, is not a system of knowledge, either empirical or a priori. It is a pursuit of meaning and sense, and not of truth.

Wittgenstein says that philosophy is not one of the natural sciences, (T 4.111). He explains in T 4.112 that philosophy is not a theory, but an activity, and that this activity is directed towards clarification of thought. A philosophical work consists, he says, of elucidations. It means that the function of philosophy is not to make a number of propositions, but to make propositions clear. If philosophy is not one of the sciences, it is also not psychology. "Psychology is no nearer related to philosophy, than is any other natural science." (T 4.1121). Then he proceeds to say that the theory of knowledge is only the philosophy of psychology (T 4.1121), and, therefore, cannot be a philosophical activity. Philosophization consists of elucidations only :

The correct method in philosophy would really be the following : to say nothing except what can be said, i.e., propositions of natural sciences, i.e., something that has nothing to do with philosophy -- and then, whenever someone else wanted to say something metaphysical, to demonstrate to him that he had failed to give a meaning to certain signs in his propositions. Although it would not be satisfying to the other person -- he would not have the feeling that we were teaching him philosophy -- this method would be the only strictly correct one (T 6.53).

It means, philosophy would be deprived of its prides and glories. There will be no possibility of metaphysics, ethics, aesthetics, religion and epistemology. Philosophy has to cease to be a superior discipline. It has to come down from the exalted and elevated position it has enjoyed

for so many centuries. But philosophers need not close their shops. Wittgenstein provides them with a new market. Their humble task is to teach others to talk properly. Philosophy is, to use Wittgenstein's own analogy, like a therapy, and its proper function is to cure conceptual headaches. This is done when one understands the function of language. Hence all philosophy is "Critique of language". In philosophy we deal with the rules of our language, and not with what this language is about independently of the language. If philosophy is not a theory but an activity, not a body of knowledge but critique of language, then we can easily see that most of the propositions and questions to be found in philosophical works are not false but nonsensical (T 4.003). The proper task of philosophy is to remove the puzzlement engendered by the linguistic confusions. The philosopher is a clarifier and not a discoverer or a creator.

CHAPTER - IV

INFLUENCE OF THE EARLIER WITGENSTEIN.

Having considered the main doctrines of the *Tractatus*, I shall now concern myself with its influence on other philosophers and philosophical systems. Wittgenstein has been rightly considered to be the pioneer of various new movements in philosophy after 1914, and the driving force in all the further course of its development. Wittgenstein was a man of extraordinary brilliance. He was an independent and original thinker, and whenever he took some ideas from others he rediscovered them for himself. His originality lies not so much in giving new theories, as in raising new problems and seeing new difficulties. Generally people are contented with the familiar aspects of the problems they are involved in, but Wittgenstein had the rare genius of detecting new difficulties. Moreover, he expressed his ideas with overwhelming power and fascination. It was thus inevitable that Wittgenstein should have exerted an enormous influence on contemporary philosophy. "There is wide agreement that no other philosopher has contributed more to the present state of philosophy as practised in English-speaking countries, and many would argue that none has contributed so much."¹

¹ I. Fitcher, G., *The Philosophy of Wittgenstein*. p. 2.

There is no doubt that the influence of Wittgenstein is present everywhere in current philosophy.

As Bertrand Russell puts it, "During the period since 1914 three philosophies have successively dominated the British philosophical world : first that of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, second that of the Logical positivists, and third that of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*." ² The third one is not my concern in this chapter. I shall discuss only the first and second phases of contemporary English philosophy. The second movement -- Logical Positivism -- originated independently in Vienna, but later on its main doctrines were formulated under the influence of Wittgenstein. The positivists used his *Tractatus* as their Bible. It means that all the successive movements of British philosophy after the break of the first world war bear Wittgenstein's influence. It is said that Wittgenstein originated these movements of philosophical thought, and also repudiated them. The first two movements played important roles during the decade immediately preceding the second world war. The third one which is called the analytic or linguistic movement is dominating the British philosophy of the day, and its influence has fast spread over all the English-speaking world. It is also true that Wittgenstein has repudiated the influence of his own works. I have already

B. Russell, B., *My Philosophical Development*,
p. 216.

mentioned that later on he came to regard the main teachings of the *Tractatus* as superstitious. In their place he passionately advocated the doctrines contained in his lectures, discussions and notes.

Whether his teachings have been interpreted correctly or not, whether the results of his influence have done good or harm to philosophy, one thing is certain that Wittgenstein is one of the most famous and influential thinkers. There would be nothing very controversial in describing him as one of the greatest philosophers of our time, and many would be quite prepared to describe him as the greatest. It was inevitable that the *Tractatus* with so powerful a system, expressed so forcefully, should have exercised an enormous influence on the subsequent philosophical thought. Russell was the first English philosopher to be influenced by the ideas of Wittgenstein. Frank Ramsey helped in the first English translation of the *Tractatus*, and wrote a critical note in *Mind* 1923. When the *Tractatus* appeared in English in 1922, it was read with great interest by the younger philosophers and had an immediate impact on some of them. C.D. Broad says : "I shall watch with a fatherly eye the philosophical gambols of my younger friends as they dance to the highly syncopated pipings of Herr Wittgenstein's flute."³ However, the *Tractatus* was widely read in England only in the 1930s, when Ayer's *Language Truth and Logic*

3. Broad, C.D., *The Mind and Its Place in Nature*, 1933, preface, p. vii.

set forth the chief tenets of logical positivism, a movement which was largely inspired by the Tractarian philosophy.

I propose to discuss the influence of the early Wittgenstein under the following heads :

- (i) Wittgenstein's influence on Russell, Wisdom, Ramsey and others.
- (ii) Wittgenstein's influence on logical positivism.

As we have seen in the first chapter, by 1911 Wittgenstein's interest had been caught by the philosophy of mathematics, and he came to Cambridge to study with Russell. From 1912 to 1917 he was engaged in discussing and writing the theses we find in the *Tractatus*. Russell's views, we know from the preface to the *Tractatus*, strongly influenced the young Wittgenstein. Without the development of the mathematical logic at the hands of Frege and Russell, it is inconceivable that Wittgenstein should have written the *Tractatus*. The state of the philosophy of logic and mathematics gave Wittgenstein a good reason "to revive the Kantian question 'How is pure mathematics possible?'" This question led him to discuss the relationship between thought and reality. He came to believe that it is possible to determine the connection of logic and reality if we can give the essence of language. On this point, once again, he was stimulated by Russell's thought, particularly, the notion of analysis. Russell pointed out that the grammatical

4. Black, M., *A Companion to Wittgenstein's Tractatus*, p. 3.

form of the sentences of ordinary language is misleading. The apparent grammatical form is different from the logical forms. Analysis reveals the real logical forms. Wittgenstein compliments Russell for this insight : "..... It was Russell who performed the service of showing that the apparent logical form of a proposition need not be its real one." T 4.0031. The notion of analysis is most important in the Tractarian philosophy. It is connected with the thesis of extensionality, and consequently, with the existence of elementary propositions and atomic facts.

But this is only one side of the picture. The other side tells us that very soon Russell came to realize that Wittgenstein was a real genius. "Getting to know Wittgenstein was one of the most exciting intellectual adventures of my life." Russell ceased to consider him a mere student, and his own thinking was greatly influenced by that of this young genius. Russell has acknowledged it at many places :

"In pure logic, which, however, will be very briefly discussed in these lectures, I have had the benefit of vitally important discoveries, not yet published, by my friend Mr. Ludwig Wittgenstein."

"The following (is the text) of a course of eight lectures delivered in (Gordon Square) London, in the first

5. Russell, B., "Ludwig Wittgenstein" *Mind*, LX, No. 239 (July, 1951), p. 298.

6. Russell, B., *Our Knowledge of the External World*, pp. 2-3.

months of 1918, (which) are very largely concerned with explaining certain ideas which I learnt from my friend and former pupil Ludwig Wittgenstein.⁷

"Wittgenstein's doctrines influenced me profoundly."⁸
 These honest acknowledgements of Bertrand Russell clearly indicate that at a time he was very much influenced by Wittgenstein. The system that he developed in this phase of his philosophical development is known as logical atomism. The beginnings of logical atomism might be dated at the publication of Russell's *Our Knowledge of the External World* in 1918. An adequate ground was prepared for this system by Russell in this book, but he introduced the name 'Logical Atomism' at the beginning of 1919, when he gave a course of lectures in London which were subsequently printed in *The Monist* (1918 and 1919). Wittgenstein's philosophical view, as expressed in the *Tractatus* and pre-*Tractatus* writings, has been rightly entitled logical atomism. Wittgenstein's logical atomism, both in logic and metaphysics constitutes "a much purer version of logical atomism than even Russell's".⁹ All significant propositions are molecules constructed of logical atoms called atomic (elementary)

7. Russell, B., 'The Philosophy of Logical Atomism' included in *Logic and Knowledge*, edited by R.C. Marsh.

8. Russell, B., *My Philosophical Development*, p. 112.

9. Pitcher, G., *The Philosophy of Wittgenstein*, p. 70.

propositions, which consist of nothing but names in a definite order. Similarly, there are only atomic states of affairs which consist of objects, and objects alone, which are simples. There are neither irreducible general facts nor irreducible general propositions. Wittgenstein's universe (of discourse) is tidier than that of Russell.

We must guard ourselves against a possible misunderstanding. One may think that Russell originated the doctrines of logical atomism independently and Wittgenstein accepted and developed them in the *Tractatus*; and that the *Tractatus* made no impact on Russell. This impression is certainly wrong. It is true that Russell was already heading towards logical atomism, but as he admits in *Our Knowledge of the External World* and in the *Monist* lectures, his final views about logical atomism were shaped and formulated under the influence of Wittgenstein's pre-*Tractatus* writings and discussions. Further he was greatly influenced by the *Tractatus* itself of which Wittgenstein sent him the type-script very soon after the Armistice, while he was a prisoner. "Wittgenstein's impact upon me" writes Russell, "came in two waves; the first of these was before the First World War; the second was immediately after the War when he sent me the manuscript of his *Tractatus*."¹⁰

Let us discuss the first phase. It is very difficult to say what exactly are the points of Wittgenstein's influence

10. Russell, B., *My Philosophical Development*, p. 112.

100

Russell's lectures (1918) on logical atomism are, as Marsh says, "probably the best record of his development of the ideas which he had discussed with Wittgenstein in the period 1912-14."¹¹ But it does not mean that Wittgenstein would have approved all of it. It is to the credit of Russell that he does not make any such claim. He says that Wittgenstein has "no responsibility for what is said in these lectures beyond that of having originally supplied many of the theories contained in them."¹² Thus it is difficult to distinguish how much Russell owes to Wittgenstein from what is his own contribution to these doctrines. But one thing is certain that the main ideas of logical atomism were suggested by Wittgenstein. However, it would be absurd to suggest that a man of Russell's genius would accept any idea from anyone without any change. The best I can do is to mention the salient features of Russell's logical atomism, and point out his differences from Wittgenstein.

Russell says that logical atomism forced itself upon him in the course of thinking about the philosophy of mathematics.¹³ He seems to believe that a logic from which the whole of mathematics can be derived must be an adequate skeleton of a language capable of expressing all that can be said. And such a language is different from ordinary language which is ambiguous and imperfect. The structure

11. Marsh (ed), *Language and Logic*, p. 175.

12. Russell, B., 'The Philosophy of Logical Atomism' Marsh Volume, p. 177.

13. Ibid, p. 175.

of this language reflects the structure of the world. As the logic has individual variables in its vocabulary, so the world would contain only particulars; as the logic requires only extensional, truth-functional connectives to compound its elementary propositions, so the world consists of independent facts.

The first important thing that we must understand is the conception of logical atoms. According to Russell, the atoms he wishes "to arrive at as the sort of last residue¹⁴ in analysis are logical atoms and not physical atoms." Some of them are 'particulars' -- "such things as little¹⁵ patches of colour or sounds, momentary things", and some of them are predicates or relations, and so on. Thus, according to Russell, particulars, predicates and relations are the last residue in analysis, out of which the world is made. The pre-Tractatus writings of Wittgenstein seem to advocate this view that the class of objects includes both particulars and predicates and relations. Not only this, in these writings he has often used the sense-datum language. He writes :

Relations and properties are objects too.
Notebooks, 16.8.13 (e)

As examples of the simple I always think of
points of the visual field.
Notebooks 6.8.13

14. Ibid, p. 179,

15. Ibid, p. 179.

Russell has expressed his indebtedness to Wittgenstein in the third lecture : "I pass on from particulars to predicates and relations and what we mean by understanding the words that we use for predicates and relations. A very great deal of what I am saying in this course of lectures consists of ideas which I derived from my friend Wittgenstein."¹⁶ But in the Tractatus Wittgenstein has changed these views. There he maintains that objects are only particulars; and that relations and properties are products of configuration. Colours, sounds etc. are material properties and can be analysed away.

Next, we have to discuss 'names', 'propositions' and 'meaning'. -- A fact, says Russell is "the kind of thing¹⁷ that makes a proposition true or false." A fact is not a particular thing but "the sort of thing that is expressed¹⁸ by a whole sentence, not by a single name like 'Socrates'." Facts belong to the objective world, and it is absurd to say that they are either true or false. They are just facts. And a proposition is a complex symbol. A proposition expresses a fact, but does not name it. What is named is a thing, not a fact. Russell accepts this distinction following Wittgenstein. "It is very important to realize such things, for instance, as that propositions are not names for facts. It is quite obvious as soon as it is pointed out to you, but as a matter I never had realized it until

16. Marsh Volume, p. 205.

17. 'The Philosophy of Logical Atomism', Marsh Volume, p. 182.

18. Ibid, p. 183.

it was pointed out to me by a former pupil of mine, Wittgenstein.¹⁹ A name just names a particular, if it does not, it is merely a noise. But there are false propositions, i.e., propositions corresponding to which there are no actual states of affairs. Thus names and propositions have meanings in two different senses.

But there is an important difference between Russell and Wittgenstein on the classification of facts. Wittgenstein accepts only particular facts, while Russell has made room for general and negative facts in his atomistic universe. He thinks that it would be a mistake to suppose that the world can be completely described by means of particular facts alone. Suppose you succeed in preparing a catalogue of all the particular facts, you still would not have got a complete description of the universe unless you also add : 'These that I have counted are all the particular facts there are.' Similarly, Russell pleads for the admission of negative facts. But negative facts are not to be recognised as a third sort of facts along with particular and general facts. Russell rather recognised four sorts of facts viz. particular positive, particular negative, general positive and general negative. It must, however, be noted that Harvard nearly rioted at the suggestion of negative facts and they could not get into currency even later. Russell accepts the thesis of extensionality in general, but

he could not deny that there were some complex propositions which were not truth-functional, and these he called intentional functions.

To summarize, it is clear that the ideal picture which guided the atomists was a universe consisting of only particular atomic facts. But only Wittgenstein is able to maintain this view, which is the purest form of logical atomism. By accepting general and negative facts Russell ceased to be a faithful representative of the school. There is one thing that seems to have no influence on Russell. It is Wittgenstein's notion of language as picture of the world. Although Russell talks of the structure of an ideal language which is precise and perfect, and consequently is capable of reflecting the structure of the world, the analogy of picture could not gain his sympathy. To this we can safely add that his indifference towards the picture theory led him to misinterpret the *Tractatus*.

Let us turn now to the second phase. In his book *My Philosophical Development* Russell does not talk about the first phase, since Wittgenstein's doctrines, he says, in 1914 were in an immature stage. What is important, he says further, is the *Tractatus*. According to Russell the basic doctrine in the *Philosophy of the Tractatus* is that a proposition is a picture of the fact which it asserts. This doctrine emphasises the importance of structure. Russell thinks that in emphasising the structure Wittgenstein was

right, but the doctrine that a true proposition must reproduce the structure of the facts concerned, seems doubtful to him (although at that time he accepted it). However, Russell could not accept Wittgenstein's thesis about the mystical. Wittgenstein maintained in the *Tractatus* that propositions cannot represent what they have in common with the facts -- the logical form. To be able to represent the logical form, we should have to be able to put ourselves with the propositions outside logic, that is outside the world (T 4.12). In the introduction to the *Tractatus* he suggested a way out of this seeming impasse. Russell conceived of the hierarchy of languages; i.e., although in any given language there are things which that language cannot express, yet it is possible to construct a language of higher order in which these things can be said. The new language cannot say certain things, but they can be expressed in the next language, and so on ad infinitum. But if Wittgenstein's doctrine of meaning is correct, there is no possibility of any such device. Wittgenstein is not concerned with the structure of any particular language, but with the structure of any significant language. Moreover, it is not possible to depict the logical form of a proposition, simply because the so called proposition which has to depict it, will be no proposition at all. A significant proposition, according to Wittgenstein, is a nexus of names which stand-for objects.

Another view which Russell accepted was Wittgenstein's treatment of identity. Wittgenstein criticised Russell's view

of identity as given in the Principia Mathematica. ²⁰ For sometime, Russell accepted his criticism, but later on he found that Wittgenstein's theory makes mathematics impossible and abandoned it.

Russell accepts, to a large extent, the doctrines of extensionality and atomicity also. The doctrine of extensionality means that the truth or falsehood of any statement depends on the truth or falsehood of the constituent elementary propositions. This principle is of very great importance, and has become common-place in the symbolic logic. But there are certain cases which seem to refute this thesis, e.g., the proposition -- 'A believes p'. Wittgenstein's argument is that 'A believes p' is not a function of p but of the words in which A expresses the proposition p. Russell does not accept this solution and gives his own in An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth. But later on, he finds the conclusion he arrived at, to be somewhat hesitant. ²¹ Russell has also discussed the principle of atomicity in this book. He summarises the conclusion that he reached in regard to both the principles as follows : (1) that the principle of extensionality is not shown to be false, when strictly interpreted, by the analysis of such sentences as "A believes p"; (2) that this same analysis does not prove the principle of

20. I 5.5302, 5.5303.

21. Russell, B., My Philosophical Development, p. 116.

atomicity to be false, but does not suffice it to be true. In the second edition of the *Principia Mathematica* (1925) Russell took account of some of Wittgenstein's doctrines. He adopted the principle of extensionality in a new introduction and considered the obvious objections to it in the Appendix C. He found that these objections were not valid.

To conclude, Russell was greatly influenced by Wittgenstein's thought. But later on he came to realise that he "went too far in agreeing with him."²³ Even when he was under Wittgenstein's influence he never accepted the latter's doctrines without subjecting them to his own searching criticism. Although he accepted Wittgenstein's general doctrines, viz., the doctrine of extensionality and that of atomicity, and the view that the structure of language reveals the structure of the world; yet wherever a controversy arises he had his own solutions to offer.

Now a mention must also be made of wisdom who is the third important contributor to logical atomism. He has written a series of articles on 'Logical Constructions' published in *Mind* Vols. 40, 41 and 42. In these articles he is primarily concerned with the meaning and analysis of logical constructions; but to explain his points in detail, he discusses the relation of language and reality, and the meaning, constituents and classification of facts -- problems

22. Russell, B., *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth*, p. 273.

23. Russell, B., *My Philosophical Development*, p. 112.

which were raised by Wittgenstein. Like Russell, wisdom also misunderstood the Tractatus. He thinks that Wittgenstein is concerned with the problems of a perfect language which can adequately reveal the structure of the world. According to wisdom, picturing is an ideal relation between a sentence and a fact which is difficult to attain. Most sentences do not picture. They only attempt to reach this ideal. Interpreting Wittgenstein, he writes : "Wittgenstein says that sentences picture facts. But hardly any sentences in ordinary language do picture facts. Wittgenstein does not wish to assert that they do. He is trying to point out an ideal to which some sentences try to attain. He should, I think, have drawn our attention to the fact that some sentences do not try to attain to this ideal." We have seen in our exposition of the Tractatus that Wittgenstein holds that all sentences are pictures of some states of affairs; otherwise, they cannot convey sense, i.e., we cannot understand them. He is not constructing an ideal language which would either replace ordinary languages, or to which sentences of ordinary language try to attain. He is not a linguistic reformist. His sole concern is to explain how ordinary language functions, i.e., how it manages to convey sense. And his conclusion is that it does so by picturing the projected situations. However, wisdom interpreted it in the sense given above. He tries, then, to develop this notion of a perfect language.

24. Wisdom, J., 'Logical Constructions' Mind, 1931, p. 232.

It must be said at the outset that Wisdom emerges as an independent thinker in these articles and comes forward with his own solutions to almost all controversial issues. But he owes much to Wittgenstein, Russell and even Moore. His primary task is to chalk out a programme for reductive analysis, and to work out the adequate means for it. Analysis is the only route, in his opinion, to the clear understanding of the world. He expresses the central idea of this movement when he says that if a sentence F expresses the fact F^1 then the object of analysing the sentence F is to get "clear insight into the ultimate structure of F^1 ".²⁵ Or more explicitly, "Philosophy is analysis".²⁶ He further says, "..... in analysis your intention is philosophical -- to increase the clarity of someone's insight into the structure of the fact located by 'F'..... And this is why philosophic progress does not consist in acquiring knowledge of new facts but in acquiring new knowledge of facts : it does not consist in a passage via inference from ignorance to knowledge but in a passage via inspection from feeble insight to good insight."²⁷ Anyone can see that Wisdom's concept of philosophy is truly Wittgensteinian. Philosophy is not a theory but an activity, says Wittgenstein (T 4.113). He further explains that the aim of philosophy is not to produce 'philosophical propositions' but to clarify the propositions of sciences. Philosophy is not one of the

25. Wisdom, J., 'Logical Constructions', Mind, 1933, p. 193.

26. Ibid, p. 193.

27. Ibid, p. 193.

sciences. Since the discovery of new facts is the business of empirical sciences philosophy has nothing to do with them. A philosophical work essentially consists of elucidations. Wisdom says that the philosophical activity consists in a passage via inspection from feeble insight to good insight; and Wittgenstein writes in T 4.112(5) "Without philosophy thoughts are as it were, cloudy and indistinct : its task is to make them clear and to give them sharp boundaries." For Wittgenstein, philosophy is the clarification of thought and language, and not a search of new facts. Wisdom accepts it and carries on the task. There is, however, an important difference. For Wittgenstein the aim of analysis is both metaphysical and linguistic : it reveals the structure of the world, and explains how language conveys sense. It is no exaggeration to say that the latter is his main task. But Russell and Wisdom concentrate on the former, and neglect the latter aspect of analysis. This is one reason why they failed to understand the *Tractatus* correctly. On particular problems, as I said, Wisdom has his own findings and views. We may discuss here a few of them.

He proposes to use the word 'fact' in what he thinks is its 'ordinary way', and selects for examples the sentences given by the *Strand Magazine*, December, 1929. A fact consists of both components and constituents. Like Russell, he maintains that even relations and predicates are elements of facts. But he agrees with Wittgenstein that the logical

arrangement is not an element in a fact. There is an important difference between Wittgenstein and Wisdom about the meaning of simples that constitute facts. In the opinion of Wittgenstein simples are partless. For Wisdom "To say of a factor that it is ultimate is not to say that it has no parts but it is to say that it has no elements"²⁸

They are, in Wisdom's opinion, not unities, but homogenous wholes — wholes which would be facts in Wittgenstein's sense.

As against Russell and Wittgenstein, Wisdom holds that "an account of the world in terms of things, an account of the world in terms of facts and an account of the world in terms of events is just an account of one world in three languages."²⁹ Wittgenstein would find it difficult to accept this position. For him, as we have seen, the world divides into facts.

We must mention Wisdom's views about general and negative propositions. He maintains that general propositions cannot be analysed in terms of a conjunction or a disjunction of elementary propositions. But it does not mean that they express a special kind of fact. The facts to which they refer are the same, but they refer to these facts in a different, less explicit manner. This solution is nearer to that of Wittgenstein than to Russell's. Similarly, Wisdom says

²⁸ Wisdom, J., 'Logical Construction', *Mind*, 1931, p. 213.

²⁹ Wisdom, J., 'Logical Constructions', *Mind*, 1931,

that a negative proposition negatively sketches a fact. This³⁰
 just means that its positive does sketch a fact. This solu-
 tion is definitely Wittgensteinian.

Coming to his view of language, unlike Russell and
 Wittgenstein, Wisdom prefers the use of 'sentence' in place³¹
 of 'propositions'. He took the picture to be a sentence.
 Further, wisdom uses the term 'sketching' which he explains³²
 with the help of Wittgenstein's view of picturing. Like
 Wittgenstein he maintains that the sentence must be identical
 in structure with the fact it pictures. But he says that an
 ordinary sentence can picture only the first derivative of³³
 the fact it expresses. Next important condition for pic-
 turing is that "someone must be using F to express p^1 ."³⁴
 On this point he is in complete agreement with Wittgenstein.
 But the most important feature of his theory is that pic-
 turing is only an ideal to which ordinary sentences try to
 attain. His concept of sketching is not so strict, and³⁵
 most sentences do sketch facts.

30. Wisdom, J., 'Logical Constructions', Mind, 1931,
 p. 470.

31. Wisdom, J., 'Logical Constructions', Mind, 1931,
 p. 301.

32. Ibid, p. 301.

33. Ibid, p. 307.

34. Ibid, p. 303.

35. Wisdom says : " F is a sketch" means "If the speaker of F is speaking truly then there is a fact p^1 such that the speaker of F is naming each constituent of p^1 , etc."

" F is a picture of p^1 " means " F is a sketch of p^1 and the elements of p^1 are its ultimate factors."
 'Logical Constructions', Mind, 1931, p. 216.

Like Russell, Wisdom too is not a reliable party-man.³⁶ He maintains that his atomic facts can contain other facts. Similarly he does not believe that all sentences are truth-compounds or truth-functional. Only Wittgenstein could maintain the system consistently. And only Wittgenstein had the courage to face the consequences of this system. If sentences can convey sense only by depicting states of affairs, then any sentence which does not picture some state of affairs is nonsensical. We can say significantly what is said by natural sciences, nothing else. Wittgenstein accepts this conclusion. But this side of Wittgenstein was not accepted by his English followers. Russell went to the extent of conceiving a hierarchy of languages to meet this challenge. However, they all agreed upon two points, viz., that language is a clue to reality, and, that for this, analysis -- analysis of complex sentences into simple ones -- is necessary. They were so passionately committed to these doctrines that they never cared to know whether what they were saying was at all possible in actual practice. There is, however, one English philosopher, who, while accepting much of Wittgenstein's doctrines, does not cling to the dogmas of logical atomism. He is Frank Plumpton Ramsey.

Ramsey was the first philosopher to write a critical note on Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*.^L Later on in his writings

36. Wisdom, J., 'Logical Constructions', *Mind*, 1933, p. 55, note (4).

included in his *Foundations of Mathematics*, he has tried to solve some problems raised in the *Tractatus*. His method of dealing with the problems is simply remarkable. In the words of Russell, "Although he writes as a disciple of Wittgenstein and follows him in everything except mysticism, the way in which he approaches problems is extraordinarily different. Wittgenstein announces aphorisms and leaves the reader to estimate their profundity as best he may. Some of his aphorisms, taken literally, are scarcely compatible with the existence of symbolic logic. Ramsey, on the contrary, is careful, even when he follows Wittgenstein most closely, to show how whatever doctrine is concerned can be fitted into the corpus of mathematical logic."³⁷

Of all Cambridge men who were immediately influenced by the *Tractatus*, Ramsey was the most prominent to see its importance. He was reared on the logic of *Principia Mathematica* and tried to remove its defects with the help of Wittgenstein's doctrines. In this effort he is in the great tradition of Frege, Peano, Whitehead and Russell; "and in a sense may be said to complete their work on the logical foundations of mathematics."³⁸ In the essay 'The Foundations of Mathematics' (1925), he takes his stand against Hilbert and Brouwer. He tries to modify the system of *Principia Mathematica* so that its 'blemishes may be avoided but its

37. Russell, B., *My Philosophical Development*, p. 126.

38. Braithwaite, R.B., (ed.), *The Foundations of Mathematics and Other Essays*, p. xi.

excellencies retained.' By the 'objective' theory of predicative functions, he shows how the contradictions (eg., I am lying) can be removed by the use of a Theory of Types which is simpler than that given by Russell, and which makes the Axiom of Reducibility unnecessary. He rejects Wittgenstein's view that the propositions of mathematics are equations, and maintains that they are tautologies. At the same time, it was from Wittgenstein that he learnt to think of logic as composed of tautologies. With the help of Wittgenstein's truth-functional analysis of propositions, he is able to derive mathematics from logic without collapsing into paradox. But other essays show him moving towards pragmatism. He tries to explain truth and knowledge as purely natural phenomena without taking recourse to strictly logical relations. These articles seem to combine Wittgenstein's doctrines with pragmatism. He says, "In conclusion, I must emphasise my indebtedness to Mr. Wittgenstein, from whom my view of logic is derived. Everything that I have said is due to him, except the parts which have a pragmatist tendency, which seem to me to be needed in order to fill up a gap in his system."

In the article 'Facts and Propositions', he maintains, following Wittgenstein, that there is really no separate problem of truth but merely a linguistic muddle. Truth and

39. 'Facts and Propositions', reprinted in *The Foundations of Mathematics and Other Essays*, edited by A.D. Braithwaite, p. 155.

falsity are ascribed primarily to propositions. To say that 'It is true that Caesar was murdered', he says, means no more than that Caesar was murdered. Then he proceeds to examine negation and other logical connectives. He agrees with Wittgenstein that 'not' is not a name, and that 'not-not-p' is the same proposition as 'p'. But he goes beyond Wittgenstein's findings and argues that the word 'not' expresses a difference in feeling, the difference between asserting and denying. He discusses the matter in a typically pragmatic manner, and says that 'disbelieving p' is identical with 'believing not p'. On the analysis of general propositions, he accepts Wittgenstein's account.

The same pragmatic tendency is evident in 'Truth And Probability' (1926). In this essay, he criticises Wittgenstein's theory of inference. Wittgenstein's view is that formal logic is the whole of logic and inductive logic is either nonsense or a part of the natural sciences. In opposition to this view, Ramsey defends induction with the help of Pierce's treatment of the subject. He says that Hume's thesis, that induction cannot be reduced to deductive inference or justified by formal logic, is correct. But to suppose that the situation which results from this is a scandal to philosophy is a mistake. Induction is a habit of the human mind. We judge mental habits by whether they

40. Ramsey, F.P., 'Truth and Probability', reprinted as above, p. 197.

work, i.e., whether the opinions they lead to are for the most part true. He says, "Induction is such a useful habit,⁴¹ and so to adopt it is reasonable." Thus he declares the logic of induction to be a human logic. Induction can be rationally justified on the basis of pragmatism. It is not merely a matter of psychology, as Wittgenstein had argued.

The same swing towards pragmatism can be traced in 'General Propositions and Causality', (1929). Here he rejects the view, which he had previously learnt from Wittgenstein, that general propositions are conjunctions of atomic propositions. But he still maintains that all propositions are truth-functional. What, then, are the propositions like 'Arsenic is poisonous' and 'All men are mortal'? He answers that they are not conjunctions, and consequently, they are not propositions in the proper sense. Russell says that general propositions cannot be treated as conjunctions, therefore there must be general facts. Ramsey holds that all propositions are truth-functional, therefore general propositions are not propositions. We should not say that they are true or false. They are ways of meeting the future. We can only say that it is right or wrong, reasonable or unreasonable to maintain them.

Ramsey says that if philosophy is nonsense then we must take it seriously, and not pretend, as Wittgenstein does, that it is important nonsense.⁴² And in opposition to

41. Ibid, p. 198.

42. Ramsey, F.P., 'Philosophy', reprinted as above.

Wittgenstein he maintains that "philosophy is a system of definitions or, only too often, a system of descriptions of how definitions might be given."⁴³ The chief danger to philosophy, he says, is scholasticism, and "a typical piece of scholasticism is Wittgenstein's view that all our everyday propositions are completely in order and that it is impossible to think illogically."⁴⁴

In sum, we may say, Ramsey accepted Wittgenstein's logic and tried to combine it with pragmatism, which necessitated certain modifications in the latter's doctrines. Ramsey's efforts were not fruitless. His criticism was partly responsible for Wittgenstein's later phase.

Before we come to logical positivism a passing reference must be made to the works of Watson and Toulmin. W.H. Watson's *On Understanding Physics* and S. Toulmin's *The Philosophy of Science* are written under Wittgenstein's influence. These authors are concerned mainly with the analysis of the language of the scientific laws. Wittgenstein discusses this problem in T 6.3's. Though he maintains that the totality of true propositions is the whole of natural science (T 4.11), yet, when he examines in 6.3's the logical status of the scientific laws, he is led to conclude that general statements in science should not be treated as truth-functions of elementary propositions. They

43. *Ibid.*, p. 263.

44. Ramsey, F.P., *The Foundations of Mathematics and Other Essays*, edited by A.E. Braithwaite. p. 269.

are not propositions in the proper sense. He says in T 6.371, "At the basis of the whole modern view of the world lies the illusion that the so-called laws of nature are the explanations of natural phenomena." As a matter of fact, they are not empirical and describe no facts. They are, rather, recommendations of a method for representing a certain class of phenomena uniformly and concisely. They do not make reports. Their function is simply to supply representational techniques by which reports can be made.

Mechanics is an attempt to construct according to a single plan all true propositions which we need for the description of the world, T 6.343.

Laws, like the laws of causation, etc., treat of the net-work and not of what the net-work describes. T 6.35(2).

Thus the general laws give only representational forms. Wittgenstein also talks of logical space and co-ordinate system, which strengthens the same conclusion. Languages are a kind of logical co-ordinate system. And as there are different co-ordinate systems, so there are different representational forms in language. ⁴⁵ This view of scientific laws is developed by Watson and Toulmin in their works.

They maintain, agreeing with Wittgenstein, that adopting a law is choosing a way of talking about facts. In the words of Watson the laws of mechanics "are the laws of our method of representing mechanical phenomena, and ---

45. Griffin, J., Wittgenstein's Logical Atomism, p. 103.

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⁴⁵ Griffin, J., Wittgenstein's Logical Atomism, p. 103.

since we actually choose a method of representation when we describe the world, it cannot be that the laws of our method say anything about the world.⁴⁶ It follows that these laws cannot be said to be true or false. It is wrong to say that Newton's laws are wrong, and that of Einstein true.⁴⁷ How then we choose between two systems of scientific explanation? Watson replies : "The fact is that in physics we choose the particular method of representation adequate to the purpose in mind."⁴⁸ The word 'correct' as applied to a physical theory has to be understood as "correct relative to a certain degree of fineness of the observations."⁴⁹ Toulmin makes this point more clear. He says that the former method of representation in optics is superseded by the wave-theory of light because the latter technique of representation has greater refinement. He likens the first to a crude road-map, and the second to a detailed physical map.

In this way Watson and Toulmin work out in detail two important views of Wittgenstein that the empirical propositions of natural sciences are models of corresponding facts; and that the scientific laws are not propositions but methods of representation which are neither true nor false, but only adequate or inadequate.

Wittgenstein's influence on the movement known as

46. Watson, W.H., On Understanding Physics, p. 52.

47. Toulmin, S., The Philosophy of Science, p. 70.

48. Watson, W.H., On Understanding Physics, p. 44.

49. Ibid, p. 53.

logical positivism which originated in Vienna and came to England through Ayer, is well known. Ayer's *Language Truth and Logic* served two purposes viz., it introduced logical positivism to English philosophers, and created more lively interest in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* which was accepted as a sacred book on positivism. Undoubtedly the earlier Wittgenstein exerted his greatest influence on Logical Positivism, and many important doctrines of this movement are directly traceable in the pages of the *Tractatus*. It does not mean, however, that the *Tractatus* was the sole inspiration of the logical positivist movement; nor is it correct to say that it is a work on positivism.

Logical positivism was originated by a group of philosophers and other philosophically minded men who gave themselves the name of the Vienna Circle (*Wiener Kreis*). But the wholesale critics of twentieth century philosophy put all the different movements of analytic philosophy under the general label of logical positivism which is entirely misleading. The label of 'logical positivist' should be reserved for those who share the special outlook of the Vienna Circle. The Vienna Circle came into existence under the guidance of Moritz Schlick in the early 1920's. Its prominent members were Rudolf Carnap, Otto Neurath, Herbert Feigl, Friedrich Waissman, Edgar Zilsel, Victor Kraft, Philipp Frank, Karl Menger, Kurt Godel and Hans Rehn. In the manifesto entitled "*Wissenschaftliche Weltauffassung, Der Wiener Kreis*"

80. These names are mentioned by Ayer in his *Logical Positivism*, p. 5.

(The Vienna Circle : Its Scientific Outlook) the authors set out a list of those whom they regarded as their main pre-cursors. The most prominent of them are the following :
 Hume, Comte, Mach, Helmholtz, Riemann, Einstein, Peano, Frege,
 Russell, Whitehead and Wittgenstein.⁵¹ Wittgenstein stood to the Vienna Circle in a special relation. Although there were other sources of inspiration, and Schlick had independently arrived at the positivistic conception of philosophy; yet the members of the Vienna Circle derived their views directly from the Tractatus, and accepted it as the most powerful and exciting exposition of their point of view. Wittgenstein was not an official member of this circle, but he maintained close relations at least with Schlick and Waismann, and discussed philosophical problems with them. The members of the Circle have explicitly expressed the connection of their views with that of Wittgenstein :

"..... Thus the earlier principle of verifiability,
 first pronounced by Wittgenstein,⁵²"

"Wittgenstein and other proponents of the scientific world -- outlook, who deserve great credit for their
 rejection of metaphysics⁵³"

"Wittgenstein's writings have been extraordinarily stimulating, both through what has been taken from
 them and through what has been rejected."⁵⁴

51. Ibid, p. 4.

52. Carnap, R., "The Old and the New Logic" reprinted in Logical Positivism, edtd. by A.J. Ayer, p. 146.

53. Neurath, O., "Sociology and Physicalism" reprinted as above, p. 284.

54. Neurath, O., "Protocol Sentences", reprinted as above p. 208.

"..... I am convinced that we now find ourselves at an altogether decisive turning point in philosophy, and that we are objectively justified in considering that an end has come to the fruitless conflict of systems..... The paths have their origin in logic. Leibnitz dimly saw their beginning. Bertrand Russell and Gottlob Frege have opened up important stretches in the last decades, but Ludwig Wittgenstein (in his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, 1922) is the first to have pushed forward to the decisive turning point.⁵⁵"

"If the preceding remarks about meaning are as correct as I am convinced they are, this will, to a large measure, be due to conversations with Wittgenstein which have greatly influenced my own views about these matters. I can hardly exaggerate my indebtedness to this philosopher.⁵⁶"

Since we cannot say with confidence what Wittgenstein would have told the members of the Vienna Circle in his private discussions, I confine our treatment to the theses expressed in the *Tractatus*. Now one of the central points of logical positivism is that the sole business of philosophy is to clarify the meaning of propositions used in science and everyday affairs; and not to solve the metaphysical problems or determine the truth of philosophical doctrines. On

55. "The Turning Point in Philosophy", reprinted as above, p. 54.

56. Schlick, W., "Meaning and Verification", reprinted in *Readings in Philosophical Analysis*, edtd. by Feigl and Sellars, p. 146.

this point the logical positivists are greatly indebted to Wittgenstein. He maintains in the Tractatus that philosophy aims at the logical clarification of thoughts; that philosophy is not a body of doctrine, but an activity, that a philosophical work consists essentially of elucidations; and that philosophy does not result in 'philosophical propositions', but rather in the clarification of propositions. We find similar views expressed by the logical positivists. They maintain that philosophy does not lead to a collection of philosophical propositions. It makes us clear about the meaning of propositions, and demonstrates that metaphysical propositions are nonsensical. Schlick said in a lecture :

There are no specific philosophical truths which would contain the solution of specific "philosophical" problems, but philosophy has the task of finding the meaning of all problems and their solutions. It must be defined as the activity of finding meaning.

If elucidation of propositions is the sole business of philosophy, then there is no scope for metaphysics. A great deal of philosophical talk is held to be literally nonsensical. The rejection of metaphysics is based on a view of language which Wittgenstein propounded in the Tractatus. The right method of philosophy, according to Wittgenstein, is

57. T 4.112(1)

58. T 4.112(2)

59. T 4.112(3)

60. T 4.112(4)

61. Schlick, M., "The Future of Philosophy" reprinted in *Basic Problems of Philosophy*, edited by Wittgenstein and others, p. 743.

to say nothing except what can be said, i.e., the propositions of natural science. Hence most of the propositions and questions to be found in philosophical works are not false but nonsensical. In this way the Tractatus leaves no room for philosophical propositions. The whole field of significant discourse is exhausted by empirical and formal statements. There remains nothing for philosophy to be about. Following Wittgenstein, the logical positivists hold that there are only two types of propositions : analytic a priori and synthetic a posteriori.

The underlying assumption is that a language consists of elementary propositions. We may not actually use elementary propositions, but the propositions we use must rest upon a foundation of elementary propositions; their truth or falsity depends on the truth-value of the elementary propositions that constitute them. They can be represented as being constructed out of elementary propositions. An elementary proposition is true if there is a fact corresponding to it. There are, however, two extreme cases, that in which a statement agrees with every truth-condition, and that in which it agrees with none. According to Wittgenstein, these two extremes are those of tautology and contradiction. On this view, all truths of logic are tautologies. They say nothing about the world. On this interpretation tautologies and contradictions are degenerate cases of factual statements.

But metaphysical assertions are meaningless because they bear no relation to facts, nor are they formal statements. The same is the fate of ethical, aesthetic and religious discourse. Now this classification of meaningful statements is based on a theory of meaning which I shall discuss a little later.

There are, however, two points concerning Wittgenstein's views about language which the logical positivists could not accept. The first is concerned with the notion of the mystical. Wittgenstein maintains that propositions are either elementary or truth-functions of elementary propositions. An elementary proposition is a picture of a fact. A proposition, it follows, must picture an actual or possible fact in order to be a proposition. I.e., a proposition with no corresponding states of affairs to depict would be a contradiction in terms. It means, we cannot speak about anything higher.⁶³ Wittgenstein seems to suggest that what we cannot speak about exists.⁶⁴ It cannot be talked about, but it is felt. It is the mystical. As Anscombe puts it, "..... nothing but picturable situations can be stated in propositions. There is indeed much that is inexpressible -- which⁶⁵ we must not try to state but must contemplate without words."

Wittgenstein says that what is of value is outside the world.⁶⁶
 There can, therefore, be no propositions expressing anything
 that is transcendental. In such situations Wittgenstein⁶⁷
 advises us to remain silent. On this point, the logical
 positivists are sharply at variance with Wittgenstein. They
 take their views about language seriously, and denounce any
 attempt to say anything that cannot be said. We cannot say,
 they hold, that there is something we cannot talk about.
 We have no right to assert or deny anything which cannot be⁶⁸
 expressed by propositions. Neurath says :

The conclusion of the Tractatus "whereof one cannot
 speak, thereof one must be silent" is at least gram-
 matically misleading. It sounds as if there were a
 "something" of which we could not speak. We should
 rather say, "If one really wishes to avoid the
 metaphysical attitude entirely, then one will be
 silent, but not 'about something'."

Let us turn to the propositions which we use to
 philosophise. If propositions represent the existence and
 non-existence of states of affairs, and the totality of
 true propositions is the whole of natural science, then there
 is no room for philosophical propositions. That is to say,
 we cannot talk about the structure of either language or
 reality, about the relation of things and names, about the

66. T 6.61 and 6.42:

67. T 7.

68. Neurath, O., 'Sociology and Physicalism' reprinted
 in Logical Positivism, edited by A.J. Ayer, p.
 284.

use of language and so forth. As Wittgenstein says in T 3.332 "No proposition can make a statement about itself, because a propositional sign cannot be contained in itself (that is the whole "theory of types")." In short, there can be no propositions about the logical form of propositions. Wittgenstein adheres to this conclusion and maintains that his propositions serve as elucidations, and in the proper sense, they are nonsensical.⁶⁹ However the philosophical propositions are not nonsense like the metaphysical assertions. Wittgenstein considers his philosophical assertions "to be illuminating nonsense."⁷⁰

The logical positivists do not accept this conclusion. They have rather accepted Russell's solution that it should be possible to speak of the logical form of a language in another language if not in the same language. We should have to speak of this second language by means of a third one, and so forth. Thus we are led to the idea of a hierarchy of languages. Rudolf Carnap, for example, talks not only of a hierarchy of languages, but also of several languages on a more or less equal footing. Everyone is free to construct his own language according to certain rules. So he says, "In logic there are no morals. Everyone is at liberty to build up his own logic, i.e., his own form of language, as he wishes. All that is required of him is that, if he wishes

69. T 3.34

70. Pitcher, G., The Philosophy of Wittgenstein, p. 155.

to discuss it, he must state his method clearly, and ⁷¹give syntactical rules instead of philosophical arguments." Not only this, Carnap is able in his logical Syntax of Language to formulate the rules of a constructed mathematical language by means of that language itself. However, semantic rules must be formulated in a meta-language. Carnap says ⁷²elsewhere :

I, as well as my friends in the Vienna Circle, owe much to Wittgenstein especially as to the analysis of metaphysics. But on the point just mentioned I cannot agree with him. In the first place he seems to me to be inconsistent in what he does. He tells us that one cannot state philosophical propositions and that whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent; and then instead of keeping silent, he writes a whole philosophical book. Secondly, I do not agree with his statement that all his propositions are quite as much without sense as metaphysical propositions are. My opinion is that a great number of his propositions (unfortunately not all of them) have in fact sense; and that the same is true for all propositions of logical analysis.

Similarly Ayer writes in the introduction to the second edi-

71. Carnap, A., Logical Syntax of Language, p. 32.

72. Carnap, A., Philosophy and Logical Syntax, p. 37.

tion of Language Truth and Logic :

"..... I now think that it is incorrect to say that there are no philosophical propositions."

There is another point on which the logical positivists do not agree with Wittgenstein. We have noticed that according to Wittgenstein, language is a picture of facts. Language, he says, mirrors the structure of the world. It follows from this that if a proposition does not depict a fact it has no claim to be a proposition. And a language that does not depict facts, is not a language at all. But according to logical positivists, propositions are not pictures of facts. Nor is it imperative for them to have the same logical form. As Ayer says :

74

"It is sometimes suggested that this relation of agreement is of same kind as that which holds between a picture and that of which it is a picture. I do not think that this is true. It is possible indeed to construct picture-languages; no doubt they have advantages; but it surely cannot be maintained that they alone are legitimate; or that a language such as English is really a picture-language although we do not know it."

73. Ayer, A.J., Language Truth and Logic (second edition), p. 26.

74. Ayer, A.J., 'Verification and Experience', PAS, 1933-37 quoted by Urnson in his Philosophical Analysis, p. 142.

75

Or again :

"If I am speaking English I may use the words 'I am angry' to say that I am angry. You may say, if you like, that in doing so I am obeying a meaning rule of the English language. For this to be possible it is not the least necessary that my words should in any way resemble the state of anger which they describe. That 'this is red' is used to say that this is red does not imply that it bears any relation of resemblance, whether of structure or content, to an actual or hypothetical red patch."

They are not interested in the concealed logical form of propositions. What is more important for them is the construction of "a common scientific language." ⁷⁶ — a language in which the languages of the different sciences, such as, physics, biology, psychology, sociology and others, could be unified.

We come now to a controversial issue, namely, the principle of verification. The logical positivists claim that it was Wittgenstein who first put forward the verification principle, and that his elementary propositions are observation-statements. I have already quoted the statements of Carnap and Schlick in this connection and I need not repeat them. Here is a passage by Karl Popper reflecting

75. Ibid, p. 143.

76. Hartnack, 'J., Wittgenstein and Modern Philosophy, translated by Maurice Cranston, p. 47.

the same positivistic interpretation of the Tractatus : ⁷⁷

"Wittgenstein, as you all know, tried to show in the Tractatus (see for example his propositions 6.53; 6.54; and 5) that all so-called philosophical or metaphysical propositions were in fact non-propositions or pseudo-propositions : that they were senseless or meaningless. All genuine or atomic propositions which described "atomic facts", i.e., facts which can in principle be ascertained by observation. In other words, they were fully reducible to elementary or atomic propositions which were simple statements describing possible states of affairs, and which could be in principle established or rejected by observation."

This interpretation makes Wittgenstein's elementary propositions observation-statements or protocol sentences, and considers analysis as analysis into units of sense-experience. If this interpretation is correct, then Wittgenstein's elementary propositions are simply records of sense-data. However, if our interpretation is correct, then both the points, that the meaning of an elementary proposition is the method of its verification, and that an elementary proposition is an observation-statement, are based on a misinterpretation of Wittgenstein's views, though there are certain passages in the Tractatus which may be construed in favour of the first point.

⁷⁷ P. F. Strawson, "Philosophy of Science" included in British Philosophy in mid-century, edited by C. A. J. Coad.

The main issue that occupied the logical positivists was the formulation of a theory of meaning, and, as we have noticed, this was the main concern of Wittgenstein in the Tractatus. We can see now, how the Tractatus inspired logical positivism. Wittgenstein maintained that the only sayable things are propositions of natural science. Natural science is the sphere of the empirically knowable. He also says that to understand a proposition means to know what is the case if it is true :

.....In order to be able to say, ' "p" is true (or false)', I must have determined in what circumstances I call "p" true, and in so doing I determine the sense of the proposition. T 4.065(2).

This is so, because the sense of a proposition is the situation it depicts. As Wittgenstein says :

What a picture represents is its sense.
T 2.221

Instead of, 'This proposition has such and such a sense', we can simply say, 'This proposition represents such and such a situation'.
T 4.031(2)

Thus, to put it too simply, propositions state that certain states of affairs exist, and that certain others do not. This seems to imply that the meaning (or sense) of a proposition is identical with its truth-conditions, and if a proposition has no truth-conditions, it seems to imply indirectly, it is senseless. This may easily be construed as a plain statement of the principle that the meaning of a proposition is the method of its verification; and this is

exactly what the logical positivists did.

But there are certain points which prevent us from jumping to this conclusion. At the outset, it must be said, that the principle of verification is a joint product of logic and epistemology. The logical positivists combined the logical conditions of meaning formulated by Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus* with certain epistemological considerations, particularly, their interest in the foundations of empirical knowledge, which were quite foreign to Wittgenstein. He was not interested in empirical investigations of any kind. He says :

Psychology is no more akin to philosophy than any other natural science. Theory of knowledge is the philosophy of psychology.

T 4.1121.

"In this passage", Anscombe correctly observes, "Wittgenstein is trying to break the dictatorial control over the rest of philosophy that has long been exercised by what is called theory of knowledge -- that is, by the philosophy of sensation, perception, imagination and, generally, of 'experience'." ⁷⁸ But the influence of the *Tractatus* led to the doctrine of verification, which made theory of knowledge once more supreme.

The logical positivists converted the conditions under which a proposition is true into the possibility of verification by sense-experience. This led them to take elementary

78. Anscombe, G.E.M., *An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus*, p. 152.

propositions of Wittgenstein as observation-statements of the 'this red now' variety, that is, to be reports of actual or possible sensory observations. But there is nothing about sensible verification in the *Tractatus*. Wittgenstein does not mention it anywhere in that book. And the view that elementary propositions are observation-statements is in manifest contradiction with what he says about them.

Wittgenstein's remarks about the truth-value of an elementary proposition have been wrongly interpreted by the logical positivists. He does not say that the truth-value of a proposition rests on sensory observation and ostensive definitions. As Anscombe very correctly says, "In the *Tractatus*, the 'determination of the circumstances in which I call a proposition true' must be a statement of its truth-conditions. This is a completely different thing from a 'rule for the use' of a sentence, if this takes the form of an 'ostensive definition.'⁷⁹" Moreover, Wittgenstein's elementary propositions are not observation-statements. First, Wittgenstein's view, that the logical product of two elementary propositions can neither be a tautology nor a contradiction (T 6.3731), refutes the view that 'this is a red path' is an elementary proposition. Next, the author of the *Tractatus* aims at giving the logical conditions of all significant languages. And, as Griffin says, "the reports in the *Tractatus* are about the world, not about experience,

79. Anscombe, G.E.H., *An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus*, p. 153.

and not about sense-data.⁸⁰"

It must, however, be admitted that the logical positivists derived the principle of verification from the Tractatus, though their interpretation of the Tractatus cannot be justified. Moreover, as Anscombe reports, "in the period between the Tractatus and the time when he began to write Philosophical Investigations, Wittgenstein's own ideas were more closely akin to those of the logical positivists than before or after."⁸¹ Moore gives the following report:⁸²

Near the beginning of (i) he (Wittgenstein) made the following statement "The sense of a proposition is the way in which it is verified" but in (ii) he said this only meant "you can determine the meaning of a proposition by asking how it is verified" and went on to say, "This is necessarily a mere rule of thumb because 'verification' means different things, and because in some cases, the question 'How is it verified?' makes no sense."

⁸³
A similar report is given by D.A.T. Gasking.

80. Griffin, J., Wittgenstein's Logical Atomism, p. 3.

81. Anscombe, G.E.M., An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus, p. 152.

82. Moore, G.E., "Wittgenstein's Lectures in 1930-33" Mind, LXIII, p. 14.

83. Wittgenstein once made the following statement: I used at one time to say that, in order to get clear how a certain sentence is used, it was a good idea to ask oneself the question, "How could one verify such an assertion." But this is just one way among others of getting clear about

The fact remains, however, that the movement of logical positivism owes a great deal to Wittgenstein's ideas. It can rather be said without any exaggeration that Wittgenstein exerted his greatest influence on this movement. The logical positivists profited both from their agreement with as well as differences from Wittgenstein. Even where they misinterpreted Wittgenstein, they did so in good faith. So far as the verification theory of meaning is concerned, time has turned against the logical positivists. But it is remarkable that this has happened due to Wittgenstein's refutation of his own earlier views.

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the use of a word or a sentence. For example another question which is often very useful to ask oneself is, "How is this word learned? How would people set about teaching a child this word?" But some people have turned this suggestion about asking for the verification into a Dogma -- as if I'd been advancing a theory about meaning, ---- 'Ludwig Wittgenstein' by D.A.F.O. and A.C.J., The Australasian Journal of Philosophy, XIX, 2, p. 27.

CHAPTER - V

THE REJECTION OF THE TRACTARIAN DOCTRINES

Before we see how Wittgenstein criticises the doctrines which he advocated so passionately in the *Tractatus*, it would be profitable to have a general survey of the movements discussed in the previous chapters. It may be hazardous to make very general remarks, but that cannot be helped. We have seen how Moore and Russell reacted against idealism, and gave rise to new movements; and how Wittgenstein and the logical positivists tried their best to eliminate metaphysics from philosophy. The idealists thought that the proper concern of philosophy was with the question 'what is the ultimate nature of Reality?', and the philosopher's method was to consist in reasoning. Only that was to be accepted, which could meet the demands of reason. The empirical knowledge of the world was questioned, and the metaphysician was required to reconstruct the world-view, which could be rationally satisfying. This concept of philosophy finds its extreme expression in Absolute Idealism.

But the progressive development of science and the tremendous success achieved in the field of mathematics

unavoidably forced the attention of philosophers upon new issues. They were compelled to reconsider the presuppositions of the traditional metaphysics. Acute metaphysicians held mutually contradictory theories. There was no way to remove their differences. On the other hand, advances in mathematics and symbolic logic led to a rigorous analysis of scientific concepts. This classificatory activity was inevitably extended to the realm of philosophy, with the hope that it would enable philosophers to sink their differences. The 'leitmotif' of the analytical approach is to diagnose and eliminate philosophical disagreement. Although analysis, in some sense or other, is inseparable from philosophical thinking, and even speculative philosophers have to analyse the statements of others and their own for the purpose of exposition and criticism, yet it has reached its peak in contemporary philosophy as a distinct movement. For, the analytic philosophers make a deliberate attempt to avoid the construction of a comprehensive world view or ontological system. This is exactly what the logical atomists and the logical positivists have claimed to have done. They claim to reduce philosophy to analysis without any remainder. But in an important sense both the logical atomists and the logical positivists have continued the tradition and played the same game. They have their own ideas of intelligibility, and their own account of the world.

According to logical atomism (of Wittgenstein), the world is the totality of facts, and facts consist of objects

which cannot exist independently. Facts are actual or possible states of affairs which make propositions true or false. Propositions, thus, express facts. In the ultimate analysis, we get only atomic or elementary propositions, which are concatenations of names alone. In an ideographic language, therefore, there is a one-to-one correspondence between the proposition and the pictured fact. The form of the proposition mirrors the form of the fact. Thus our language is a mirror of the world. If we know the hidden structure of language, we can know the logical form of the world. Whatever can be significantly said, must be analysable; otherwise it is senseless. Thus metaphysical propositions are declared to be senseless, because they do not picture facts. But the entire *Tractatus* consists of metaphysical statements since it talks about the structure of the world and language. Russell explicitly admitted this; and tried to remove the linguistic impasse by advocating a hierarchy of languages. However, both Russell and Wittgenstein departed from the commonsense view of the world, and conceived a view of the world or reality which was as metaphysical as Absolute Idealism. The view that language is a picture of the reality, is largely a modified version of the Hegelian dictum 'Real is rational'. According to both idealism and logical atomism, the structure of thought or language is the structure of the real. Further, the value of analysis was limited by dogmatic assumptions about the nature of language. It was assumed that language is essentially truth-functional; that language is used for one purpose, viz., the stating of facts; that

names get their meanings by referring to objects, and sentences get their meanings through 'picturing'. The remainder was bound to be nonsense.

The same is true of logical positivism. My purpose is not to continue this gloomy voyage, but to comment briefly on its underlying assumptions. Here the situation is decidedly odd, because while both Russell and Wittgenstein accepted that their systems implied a certain form of the world-view, positivists have denied it. In theory, they are extremely radical and claim to reject all sorts of metaphysics. They say that philosophy as such could have no concern with questions of fact. Philosophy is empirically uninformative. It is said that "Mother" philosophy is left alone, when one by one her offsprings established their independent households. Thanks to this break away of the special sciences, philosophy has been freed to become what it ought to have been, i.e., analysis of language. They take Wittgenstein's dictum seriously, "philosophy is not one of the natural sciences." The philosopher is not an empirical investigator and his job is not to compete with the scientists. Neither has he any access to the "transcendent" reality. Ethics and aesthetics have only emotive value. Nor is philosophy the "queen" of sciences which could coordinate and synthesize them into one grand symphony of knowledge. With all these alternatives ruled out, only the sphere of meaning remained. Philosophers are advised not to close their shops, they have been provided with new markets. Thus linguistic investigation is the sole

business of philosophy. And in the opinion of Ayer all great philosophers of the past "were primarily not metaphysicians but analysts"¹. Language is not a part of the philosopher's job but the whole of it.

Now the question is : is logical positivism really free from metaphysics? No. They surely have their own metaphysical beliefs, which are open to serious philosophical criticisms. Even if the verification principle is free from metaphysical assumptions, their doctrines of physicalism and the 'unity of sciences' imply and "express a particular world-view; a particular ideal of rational acceptability."² Their demands for intelligibility (or meaningfulness) are as extraordinary as those of the logical atomists or the idealists. They do not hesitate to throw over the commonsense view of the world if it fails to square with their principles. No doubt they were not transcendentalists, but they did construct a metaphysic of experience. They are metaphysicians in disguise. ✓

Not only this, their theory of language is also dogmatic. Though the positivists do not maintain, like the atomists, that the analysis of language is itself the key to metaphysical truth, yet they, too, believe that language is

1. Ayer, A.J., *Language Truth and Logic*, second edition, p. 82.

2. Harnock, G.J., *English Philosophy since 1800*, p. 57.

essentially an instrument for the communication of facts. The linguistic discourse is divided into two types -- cognitive and emotive. The former alone has literal meaning. Emotive sentences consist of expressions of attitudes, feelings, emotions etc. Emotive expressions lack cognitive meaning, since they do not refer to sense experience. There is no point in calling them true or false. And empirical sentences are meaningful or senseless, according as they are verifiable or not. It is not my purpose to discuss the verification principle. My sole concern is to point out that this view of language is highly artificial, and does not do justice with the actual function of language. 'Cognitive meaning' is itself a metaphysical term, and is based on a number of persuasive definitions. Obviously, language is maltreated, and not analysed or investigated. It is so, because the positivists use the language of natural sciences as paradigm. They forget that words of a natural language have a variety of functions or uses. Nondescriptive uses are of so many kind and cannot be dumped to rot in the emotive lumber-room.

Finally, both the atomists and the positivists, inspite of their important differences, have done the same thing, and commit the same mistake. Their systems do have metaphysical beliefs, and their conceptions of language are artificial, misleading and far from truth.

Philosophy, thus, faced a serious deadlock, and the exponents of these movements were themselves suspicious about

their achievements. Something had gone wrong somewhere. And a fresh consideration was very much in order. It required a thinker of great genius to break through the impasse. Wittgenstein's services were once more needed.

In his preface to the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein said confidently : "the truth of the thoughts communicated here seems to me unassailable and definitive. I am, therefore, of the opinion that the problems have in essentials been finally solved."³ Thus when he completed the *Tractatus*, he found that the fundamental problems of philosophy had been solved, and there was no need for further philosophising. Any one who is acquainted with Wittgenstein's life and character, knows that he had a strong hatred for the academic life. It should not, therefore, be a surprise that he abandoned philosophy when he realised that there was no important work to be done. In the words of Passmore, "He had turned philosopher, in his engineer's way, in order to drain what seemed to him a swamp. The task was completed; there was no more to be said."⁴ But in his years of silence he was not left entirely alone. Ramsey and Braithwaite had discussions with him in Austria. For some time, he was in close contact with the members of the Vienna Circle, especially Waismann and Schlick. In March 1928, he had heard Brouwer lecture in Vienna on the foundations of mathematics. It is said that

3. *Tractatus*, p. 29.

4. Passmore, J., *A Hundred Years of Philosophy*, p. 425.

this led him to take up philosophy again. He felt that he could again do creative work. Early in 1929 Wittgenstein arrived at Cambridge. In this year he submitted his *Tractatus* for the D.Phil degree, and wrote the article "Some Remarks on Logical Form". It means that he was not yet convinced of the falsity of the doctrines of the *Tractatus*. Nor was he clear about the new ideas. His extreme confidence in the truth of the Tractarian philosophy was shaken that is all. Moore reports that Wittgenstein said to him that when he wrote the article "Some Remarks on Logical Form", he was getting new ideas about which he was still confused. But in the course of the next few years, he came to realize fully that the doctrines he advocated in the *Tractatus* were actually false. This is obvious from his lectures delivered in 1930-33, and from the Blue and the Brown Books. In these lectures and notes, we find new trends which are finally expressed in the *Philosophical Investigations*. The manuscripts and typescripts of about 1930 represent the transitional period. "He was at this time fighting his way out of the *Tractatus*." During 1930-33 a radical change took place in Wittgenstein's thinking. There came to him, at this time, those ideas, whose development and clarification absorbed him for the rest of his life.

Wittgenstein's new philosophy signalizes a radical

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5. Moore, G.E., "Wittgenstein's Lectures in 1930-33" reprinted in *Philosophical Papers*, p. 253.
 6. Van Wright, G.E., 'Biographical Sketch', reprinted in *Malcolm's Memoir*, p. 14.

departure from the traditional paths of philosophy. It falls entirely outside any philosophical tradition, and has, perhaps, no source of influence. As Von Wright tells us, "The author of the *Tractatus* had learned from Frege and Russell. His problems grew out of theirs. The author of the *Philosophical Investigations* has no ancestors in philosophy."⁷ But it was the criticisms of the doctrines of the *Tractatus* by his friends that stirred him to think afresh. His discussions with Ramsey, Wittgenstein tells us, woke him from his dogmatic slumber.⁸ He says :

.....Since beginning to occupy myself with philosophy again I have been forced to recognise grave mistakes in what I wrote in that first book (i.e., the *Tractatus*). I was helped to realize these mistakes -- to a degree which I myself am hardly able to estimate by the criticism which my ideas encountered from Frank Ramsey, with whom I discussed them in innumerable conversations during the last two years of his life.

It seems, however, that Ramsey not only made Wittgenstein aware of the defects of the *Tractatus*, but also suggested certain positive ideas to adopt. We can yet only guess. There is a distinct pragmatic streak in the later writings of Wittgenstein. This is probably due to the influences of Ramsey and William James. It was above all, P. Graffa's acute and forceful criticism that compelled him to abandon his earlier views and set out upon new roads. "He said that his discussions with Graffa made him feel like a tree from

7. Ibid, p. 15.

8. PI, Preface, p. x

which all branches had been cut.⁹ The positive doctrines, if any, which he received from Graffia are not known. It is thus clear, that the later Wittgenstein is obliged to nobody for the elaboration of his new ideas, and has no source of influence. His ideas are entirely original. A more original thinker is difficult to find. We can understand his later ideas, if we know why he abandoned his earlier views. His later ideas grow out of the criticisms of his earlier doctrines, and can be fully understood only in light of them.¹⁰

9. Von Wright, G.H., 'Biographical Sketch', reprinted in Malcolm's Memoir, p. 16.

10. Note : I wish I could discuss in detail the development of Wittgenstein's thought through different stages during the period of 1930-35. His lectures during 1930-33 are not available in book-form. However, we can depend on Moore's notes. The Blue Book was dictated to his class in Cambridge during the session 1933-34. He dictated the Brown Book to two of his pupils (Francis Skinner and Alice Ambrose) during 1934-35. He showed them only to very close friends and pupils. He never thought to publish the Blue Book. The Brown Book was rather different and at a time he thought to publish it. But when he began the first part of the Philosophical Investigations, he wrote about the Blue Book, "This whole attempt at a revision, from the start right upto this point is worthless." (BB, p. vi). It is not possible to elaborate the differences of these works for want of space. However, I cannot resist the temptation of saying something, in brief, about their general nature.

Moore's notes reveal, that in his lectures Wittgenstein criticised his earlier views, and was in the grip of new ideas about the nature and function of language, about the philosophy of logic and mathematics. He rejected the following views about meaning : (i) the view that the meaning of a word is some image which it calls up by association; (ii) the view that, the object pointed at, is the meaning of the word; and (iii) the view that, a word is related to its meaning in the same way in which a proper name is related to the 'bearer' of that name. He maintains that (i) the meaning of a word is determined by the 'grammatical rules' and

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Let us now consider the objections to major themes of the Tractatus that are formulated in his later works.

We have seen in our study of the Tractatus that the conception of reductive analysis is the major villain of the

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(11) every significant word must necessarily belong to a 'system'. But in 1933 he said that this was only one sense of the word 'meaning'. He used the word 'language-game' to indicate the indefiniteness of 'sense'. In 1933 he said that the 'verification principle' was merely a rule of thumb and that there are propositions for which it makes no sense to ask for a verification. He also realised that the fact that neither Russell nor he could produce any examples of 'atomic' propositions proved that something was wrong, though he could not say exactly what it was. He also criticised Sheffer's notation and Tarski's three valued logic. It means that Wittgenstein realised that words have indefinite senses; that the notion of analysis is defective; that logic does not do justice with the ordinary meaning of words. But he was not yet aware of the nature of language-games, the nature of meaning and the role of philosophical words.

The Blue and Brown Books represent further development in his philosophical journey. In the Blue Book he continues to talk about "language games". The study of "language games" is necessary in order to shake off the idea of a necessary form (this is one of the earliest use that he makes of them); and to shed light on primitive forms of language or primitive languages. He says that in order to study the problems of truth and falsehood of the relation of propositions with reality, of the nature of assertion etc., it is advantageous to look at primitive forms of language. "When we look at such simple forms of language the mental mist which seems to enshroud our ordinary use of language disappears. We see activities, reactions, which are clear-cut and transparent." (BB, p. 17). It gives the impression, that we are required to give something like an analysis of our ordinary language in a way which removes the ambiguity and indefiniteness that enshrouds it. But the Brown Book denies it. That is why he says in the Brown Book that he is "not regarding the language games which we describe as incomplete parts of a language, but as languages complete in themselves". (BB, p. 51). That is why he says there that "agreement and disagreement with reality" would be different in the different languages.

continued

piece. It leads Wittgenstein to believe that the world divides not into things, but into facts, and facts are combinations of simples; and that propositions are truth-functions of elementary propositions which are combinations of names only. Each proposition has one and only one final analysis, and corresponding to every elementary proposition there is a definite atomic fact, if it is true. The later Wittgenstein realizes that this notion of analysis is unwarranted, mistaken

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That is why he asks whether "Brick" means the same in the primitive language as it does in ours. But even the Brown Book is only a half-way house. In the Brown Book the account of the different language-games is not directly a discussion of particular philosophical problems, although it is intended to throw light on them. In the Investigations, he is directly concerned with the philosophical problems. He says that it is the tendency to sublime the logic of our language which leads people to talk about the ultimate nature of language, or the logically correct grammar. He also discusses the notions of "simple" and "complex" and the idea of logical analysis. While discussing language-games, Wittgenstein is not giving any analysis. If he talks of "primitive" or "simple-languages", it does not mean that they reveal the simple forms which a more complicated language must have. They are mentioned, rather, in the words of Rmus Rhees, "to show how the use of language-games can make clear what a philosophical problem is." (RB, preface x).

In the Investigations he discusses the relations of logic and language, which he does not do in the Brown Book. Wittgenstein is quite aware in the Brown Book that language does not function according to strict rules, it does not have that kind of unity which is permitted in a calculus. "But he does not discuss why people have wanted to suppose that it has." (RB, p. x). As against Rmus Rhees, I venture to say that Wittgenstein does take up this point in the Blue Book when he talks of "a craving for generality". (BB, p. 17). But Rmus Rhees is correct when he says that in the Blue Book Wittgenstein is not clear about the character of philosophical puzzlement. He points out excellently that "Wittgenstein makes it plain in the Blue Book that words have the meanings

continued

and misleading.

Let us take the first point first. The later Wittgenstein, tells us that how anything divides up is not something determined by that thing itself. No doubt, we often talk about the constituents of a thing, but it should not lead us to suppose that there is only one way of looking at the thing. We can divide a composite thing from different points of view. Thus there is not one but many ways of analysing a thing. As Pitcher says, "One account might be better for some points of view, another better for other purposes or more appropriate from other points of view."¹¹ It means, it is wrong to say that the world divides into facts, and not into things. It may be divided into facts or things or events, as Wisdom pointed out in his 'Logical Constructions'. As a matter of fact, there are innumerable categories into which the world can be divided.

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we give them, and that it would be a confusion to think of an investigation into their real meanings. But he has not yet seen clearly the difference between learning a language-game and learning a notation. And for that reason he cannot quite make out the character of the confusion he is opposing." (25, pp. xi-xii). However, what he says in the Investigations may be taken as the development of what he has to say in the Blue Book.

11. Pitcher, G., The Philosophy of Wittgenstein, p. 173.

Wittgenstein goes further and challenges the very notion of "absolute simples". He says that it makes no sense to describe a thing either as simple or complex in itself. A thing is either simple or complex in a particular context. His discussion of this problem in the Investigations makes it clear, that nothing is either absolutely simple or absolutely complex. Wittgenstein maintained in the Tractatus, that names denote absolutely simple things, and propositions state states of affairs which are necessarily complex. But now he says, that in a certain context, for some purposes, or when looked at from a particular view point a thing may be called simple. In other contexts, for some other purposes, or from a different point of view, the same thing may be called composite. Simplicity and complexity are not qualities of the things themselves.

If I tell someone without any further explanation : "what I see before me now is composite", he will have the right to ask : "what do you mean by 'composite'?" For there are all sorts of things that that can mean!" The question "Is what you see composite?" makes good sense if it is already established what kind of complexity - that is, which particular use of the word - is in question.

PI, Sec. 47.

Thus whether a thing is simple or composite depends on the context in which it is being considered; and if we isolate it from all possible contexts, then it makes no sense to ask whether it is simple or complex.

We use the word "composite" (and therefore the word "simple") in an enormous number of different and differently related ways.

PI, Sec. 47.

However, philosophers including the author of the *Tractatus* have made this mistake of supposing that things are made up of absolutely simple entities.

Coming to the linguistic analysis itself, the most fundamental thesis of the *Tractatus* which was at the basis of Wittgenstein's conception of analysis was his notion that every proposition has a perfectly determinate or fixed sense. It is this assumption which led him to postulate the existence of simples (T 3.23). It is this assumption which led him to argue that the propositions of ordinary language are truth-functional, and must be analysed into a set of elementary propositions, which have a perfectly fixed sense. Wittgenstein advises to go on analysing a proposition until all descriptive terms are eliminated, i.e., until we reach propositions consisting of primitive signs. A proposition containing a description is indeterminate and needs further analysis. He wrote in T 3.251 that what a proposition expresses, it expresses in a determinate manner. Explaining the picture that held him captive he says :

The sense of a sentence -- one would like to say--may, of course, leave this or that open, but the sentence must nevertheless have a definite sense. An indefinite-sense-that would really not be a sense at all. This is like : An indefinite boundary is not really a boundary at all

PI, Sec. 99.

It is, then, this idea which makes the assumption so attractive. If a sentence has sense at all, it must have a definite sense--

an indefinite sense is no sense. A sentence may, no doubt, be vague, but it must have a perfectly determinate sense. The earlier Wittgenstein acted under this conception. Once this assumption is accepted, we are bound to believe -- as Wittgenstein did in the *Tractatus* -- that every proposition must be capable of the final analysis which reveals the real form concealed by the apparent grammatical form of the original proposition (T 4.0031). The later Wittgenstein comes to realize that this was a "pre-conceived idea" (PI, Sec. 108), not the product of actual analysis. As early as 1932-33 Wittgenstein said in his lectures that neither Russell nor he himself had produced any examples of 'atomic' propositions; and that there was something wrong indicated by this fact.¹² Similarly he writes :

The man who is philosophically puzzled sees a law in the way a word is used.

IB, p. 27.

He says elsewhere :

We want to say that there cannot be any vagueness in logic. The idea now absorbs us that the ideal 'must' be found in reality.

PI, Sec. 101.

Where does this idea come from? It is like a pair of glasses on our nose through which we see whatever we look at. It never occurs to us to take them off.

PI, Sec. 103.

He explains it more clearly :

When we believe that we must find that order, must find the idea., in our actual language, we become

12. Moore, G.E., 'Wittgenstein's lectures in 1930-33' reprinted in *Philosophical Papers*, p. 296.

dissatisfied with what are ordinarily called "propositions", "words", "signs". The proposition and the word that logic deals with are supposed to be something pure and clear-cut. And we rack our brains over the nature of the real sign.

PI, Sec. 106.

After analysing the cause of the assumption which is so natural, so attractive, Wittgenstein proceeds to demolish this ideal. Wittgenstein said in his lectures during 1932-33 that logic plays a part different from what he and Russell and Frege supposed it to play; and a little later he said, that he could not give a general definition of 'proposition' anymore than of 'game'.¹³ He further said that he was misled by the expression 'sense', and that neither 'sense' nor 'proposition' could be 'sharply bounded'.¹⁴ He concluded finally that ' "makes sense" is vague, and will have different senses in different cases'.¹⁵ Similarly he says in the Blue Book that the actual usage of a word has no sharp boundary.¹⁶

He says in the Philosophical Investigations that he never investigated the actual usage; his theories had required that there must be real forms or exact sense. But if we shed the preconceived idea, and look at the actual usage, we find that our language does not conform to our previous requirement (PI, Sec. 107). It is wrong to say that we can understand a

13. Ibid, p. 261.

14. Ibid, p. 273.

15. Ibid, p. 274.

16. BB, p. 19.

proposition only if it has a perfectly determinate sense. In our actual discourse, we use sentences or expressions which are vague and indefinite; but they present no difficulty before us. Wittgenstein says in the Blue Book that many words do not have a strict meaning. But this is not a defect. "To think it is would be like saying that the light of my reading lamp is no real light at all because it has no sharp boundary." ¹⁷ Even if these vague expressions create some misunderstanding, it is possible to remove it by further explanation. What is needed is a brief clarification, not analysis. Usually if our expressions are inexact, they do not prevent us from achieving our purpose.

If I tell some one "stand roughly there" -- may not this explanation work perfectly? And cannot every other one fail too?

PI, Sec. 88.

And if I am understood my purpose is achieved however indefinite the expression I use may be. There is no demand for further analysis. Or only a philosopher misled by the false ideal of exactness will ask for it. Wittgenstein, therefore, proceeds to describe the notion of 'exactness'. Let us understand what 'exact' and 'inexact' mean? It is misleading to isolate these terms from the actual contexts in which they are used. There is nothing like 'absolutely exact'. What 'exact' means depends on the situation and context in which

17. IB, p. 27.

it is used. If so, it may mean different things on different occasions, and there is nothing common which may be called the essence of exactness. For instance, consider the expression "exact time". Does it mean "the absolutely exact time"? But what is the sense of "the absolutely exact time"? As a matter of fact, "what counts as exact time depends on and varies with the type of situation, including the needs and aims of the people involved."¹⁹ Wittgenstein says :

"Inexact" is really a reproach, and "exact" is praise. And that is to say that what is inexact attains its goal less perfectly than what is more exact. Thus the point here is what we call "the goal". Am I inexact when I do not give our distance from the sun to the nearest foot, or tell a joiner the width of a table to the nearest thousandth of an inch?

No single ideal of exactness has been laid down; we do not know what we should be supposed to imagine under this head -- unless you yourself lay down what is to be so-called. But you will find it difficult to hit upon such a convention; at least any that satisfies you.

PI, Sec. 38

It makes, therefore, no sense to talk of "the absolutely exact". Every situation has its own sense and criterion of exactness. It is only our 'craving for generality', as Wittgenstein says in the Blue Book, that misleads us.

Not only the notion of complete and ultimate analysis, the very notion of reductive analysis is under fire. In the Tractatus, Wittgenstein said that a proposition is to be analysed into elementary propositions, which express the sense

19. Pitcher, G., The Philosophy of Wittgenstein, p. 176.

of the original proposition clearly and specifically. In the Philosophical Investigations he makes the following objections against this idea : (a) it is difficult to say that in every case the elementary propositions are equivalent to the original proposition; and (b) it is wrong to say that the elementary propositions express the sense of the original proposition more clearly and explicitly.¹⁹

Wittgenstein illustrates these points in the Philosophical Investigations. Suppose we have to explain the proposition : "The broom is in the corner". On analysis the proposition would be equivalent to the conjunction of the propositions : (a) The broom is in the corner, (b) the brush is in the corner, and (c) the broomstick is attached to the brush. Do the analysed propositions say, what the original proposition says? Certainly not, says Wittgenstein. In short, he wants to stress that analysis is not the only or the most fundamental method of getting clear about an ambiguous or vague expression. The notions of both "the absolutely simple" and "the absolutely exact" have been shown to be mythical. It is, therefore, absurd to insist on the analysis of propositions. Propositions need be only as precise and exact as the contexts demand. Why should they be any more so? And does it make sense to ask for the more?

The next important thesis of the *Tractatus*, which Wittgenstein extensively criticizes in his later works, is his conception of meaning. I propose to discuss this problem under the following heads :

Meaning of words

Meaning (sense) of propositions

Role of intending in meaning

Wittgenstein argued in the *Tractatus* that the meaning of a word is the object it denotes. It does not mean that every word has meaning in this technical sense. He never said, that every word stands for some object. Rather, only logically proper names have meaning. He used both 'name' and 'objects' in a technical sense. By a name he meant a term that cannot be verbally defined. Similarly, by an object he meant something absolutely simple. He maintained, thus, that only logically proper names have meaning, and the meaning of a name is the object which it denotes. A name, then, means an object. The object is its meaning (T 3.203).

This conception of meaning is based, mainly, on two considerations : that there are absolutely simple objects, and that propositions have absolutely determinate sense. He said that if a term designates something complex, then it is never a logically proper name. It is only an implicit description of that complex. Similarly, he said in T 3.23, that the requirement that simple signs be possible, is the requirement that sense be determinate. Now, having shown that there

is nothing like absolutely simple, and that it makes no sense to speak of a perfectly determinate sense, the later Wittgenstein could not accept the view that the meaning of a logically proper name is the simple object it denotes. There are neither logically proper names nor simples. He puts the notion of proper names to severe criticism. Suppose 'this' is a proper name. Let us then explain the word "tove" by pointing to a pencil and saying "this is tove". It may give the impression that 'this' directly names a particular object. But the ostensive definition "this is tove" can be interpreted in all sorts of ways. The definition can be interpreted to mean :

"This is a pencil",

"This is round",

"This is wood",

"This is one",

20

"This is hard", etc., etc.,

Granted that the view that simple objects are meanings of logically proper names is absurd. It is still possible to maintain that the meaning of a term is the object it denotes. Neither 'name' nor 'object' is used in any technical sense. Hence this view is not open to the objections based on the impossibility of simples. According to the present version of the name-theory of meaning, such words as 'Socrates', 'Moses', 'Pido', 'Himalaya', etc., are names, and the objects

corresponding to them are their meanings. In his later works, Wittgenstein destroys even this modified version.

Wittgenstein comes to realize that in the *Tractatus* he had confused meaning with reference. It is wrong to say that the meaning of a name is the thing corresponding to it. It is based on our misunderstanding of the grammar of the word 'name'. In the *Blue Book*, Wittgenstein says that in order to understand the meaning of 'meaning', it is advantageous to replace the question "what is the meaning of a word?" by "what is an explanation of meaning?" By this, we bring the question "what is meaning?" down to earth. And it cures the temptation to look for something which might be called the meaning.²¹ Similarly, he says in the *Brown Book* that Augustine's description of learning the language was correct²² for a simpler language than ours.²³ He neglected the words which name nothing -- words as 'today', 'not', 'but', 'perhaps'. In the *Investigations* we find Wittgenstein ruthlessly criticising his earlier thesis. He starts out by quoting an important passage from Augustine's *Confessions*. This passage, according to Wittgenstein, gives us a particular picture of the essence of human language, a picture which leads us to believe that "Every word has a meaning. This meaning is correlated with the word. It is the object for which the word stands."²⁴ This description of the essence of

21. *BB*, p. 1.

22. Augustine says that he was taught to speak by learning.

23. *BB*, p. 77.

24. *PI*, Section 1.

language takes into consideration primarily nouns like 'table', 'chair', and of people's names, and only secondarily, of the names of certain actions and properties; and leaves the remaining kinds of words as something that will take care of themselves. Another important factor that leads us to believe that the meaning of a name (or word) is the object referred to by it, is the view that language has only one function, namely, to describe facts. Wittgenstein demolishes this picture by asserting that our language has innumerable kinds of sentences, e.g., assertion, question, and command. There are countless different kinds of use of what we call "symbols", "words", "sentences"²⁵. Not only this. "Description" itself means different things in different circumstances -- description of a body's position, description of a facial expression, description of a sensation of touch, description of a mood. But one who thinks that learning a language consists in giving names to objects can say "we name things and then we can talk about them : can refer to them in talk". As if, language consists of only naming objects, and talking about them. Whereas, says Wittgenstein, we do the most various things with our sentences.

Think of exclamations alone, with their completely different functions.

Water!
 Away!
 Ovi
 Help!
 Fine!
 No!

Are you inclined still to call these words "names of objects"?

PI, Sec. 27.

Wittgenstein, then, proceeds to attack this picture of language from a different side. He says that one can ostensibly define a proper name, the name of a colour, the name of a material, a numeral, and so on. But, he adds, "an ostensive definition can be variously interpreted in every case."²⁶

Finally, Wittgenstein attempts to destroy this theory by showing the absurdities which follow from its acceptance. If the meaning of a name is the object corresponding to it, then it should make perfectly good sense to say that the meaning of the name 'N.N.' dies, when Mr. N.N. dies. Moreover, it would make no sense to say "Mr. N.N. is dead" because when Mr. N.N. dies his name ceases to have meaning. But we never say that the meaning of a name is dead. And it makes perfectly good sense to say that Mr. N.N. is dead. Consequently, meaning cannot be identical with the object named. Wittgenstein says, that what corresponds to a name is its bearer, not its meaning.²⁷ In the Tractatus, he confounded the meaning of a name with the bearer of the name. Meaning is different from bearer. That is why we can say, "the bearer of 'N.N.' dies", and "the bearer of 'N.N.' is dead". It is possible to talk about a dead man, because even after his death, his name does not cease to have meaning.

It may be objected : Wittgenstein's example is unfortunate, because proper names have no meaning. But the

²⁶. PI, Sec. 26.

²⁷. PI, Sec. 40.

objection, even if valid, makes no harm to his analysis of meaning. The meaning of a word, and the object corresponding to it, are two different things. That is why it is not possible to say such things as, "I broke part of the meaning of the word 'slab'", or "I laid a hundred parts of the meaning of the word 'slab' to day." Such utterances should not be absurd, if the meaning of the word "slab" is slab (a kind of piece used in constructing buildings) itself. Wittgenstein sums up the issue thus :

For a large class of cases -- though not for all -- in which we employ the word "meaning" it can be defined thus : the meaning of a word is its use in the language.

PI, Sec. 43.

It is really the use that determines the meaning of a word, not the object corresponding to it. A word may have meaning, even if nothing corresponding to it exists. Consequently, the very foundation of the picture theory is demolished.

The picture theory of propositions, as developed by Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus*, was highly technical. It did not mean simply that sentences are about some states of affairs. What rather constituted the heart of the picture theory was the assumption that both propositions and the corresponding states of affairs are identical in respect of their logical form. In the strict sense, only elementary propositions were supposed to be pictures of facts. There must be a one-to-one correspondence between the components of a picture and those of the pictured fact. Only an ele-

mentary proposition, consisting entirely of names, could meet this demand. An elementary proposition was supposed to picture the corresponding fact, because according to the earlier Wittgenstein, names directly refer to simple objects of the fact.

Now with the abandonment of the theses of simples, exact sense, reductive analysis, and simple signs, the picture theory crumbles down. With its very foundations swept away it cannot survive. If it makes no sense to speak of absolutely simple objects, it is no longer possible to assert the existence or non-existence of their arrangements, i.e., atomic facts. Similarly, in the absence of absolutely simple objects, there can be no words to name them. With no words, which do nothing but name simples, there can be no elementary propositions. With the elimination of both the pictures and the pictured facts, the picture theory of language dissolves into nothingness. Apart from this technical consideration, Wittgenstein realizes in his later works that the function of language is not just to describe things. It has rather countless tasks to do.

The picture theory has yet another feature which Wittgenstein attacks in his later works. It concerns his assumptions about the mental act of meaning. One of the central problems of the *Tractatus* is, to determine the relationship between language and the world. How do propositional signs describe situations? A propositional sign of itself can describe nothing. Wittgenstein is led to believe

in the Tractatus that we intend a propositional sign to picture the corresponding state of affairs. The correlation between language and the world is established by the mental act of intending.²⁸ The correlation is something that is done by the speaker or the writer. A group of marks is never a picture of any sort. It can represent anything only if a conscious agent intends it to do so. It is in this way that the elements of a proposition are correlated with the elements of a fact. This explains how the picture is attached to reality (T 2.1511).

Wittgenstein rejects this notion both in the Blue Book and in the Investigations. He realizes that if a set of words of itself means nothing, and requires in addition that act of intending, then we should be able to mean anything by it. We should, for instance, say "a-b-c-d" and be able to mean with the help of intending "The weather is fine."²⁹ Try it. It is very difficult. But it should present no difficulty if the mental act theory is correct.

Secondly, if the act of meaning something by a propositional sign is a different act from speaking it, then it should be possible to do the first act without the second. Think, for example, that it will rain tomorrow without saying "it will rain tomorrow".³⁰ Is it not absurd?

28. H.B., entry for 26.11.14.

29. PI, Sec. 508.

30. IB, p. 49.

Wittgenstein points out many other difficulties (which cannot be discussed here for want of space) and concludes :

"..... nothing is more wrong-headed than calling meaning a mental activity.

Pl, Sec. 693.

His view now is, that meaning depends not on any mental activity or intending, but on conventions and contexts. It is the use, that determines the meaning of a word, not any occult mental act.

CHAPTER - VI

A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS

What I have tried to show in the previous chapter is that Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* contains the best comments on his earlier doctrines. One can understand the central ideas of the *Tractatus* more correctly and precisely in the light of Wittgenstein's remarks about analysis, exactness, complexity, intending, meaning rules, ideals, criteria etc., in the *Philosophical Investigations* and the *Blue and Brown Books*. What I wish to emphasize further is, that a correct interpretation of Wittgenstein's later views requires a thorough understanding of the *Tractarian* theses. A careful student of Wittgenstein's later works cannot escape the feeling that here he is struggling mainly with his own earlier views. The philosophical theories discussed and demolished are mostly those which, he thinks, misled him in the *Tractatus*. In order to realize the force of his ruthless criticisms of the philosophical doctrines, one must know how the earlier Wittgenstein was misled by certain ideals and pictures. Wittgenstein himself has made¹ this point in the Preface to the *Philosophical Investigations*.

I shall begin, therefore, my interpretation of this extremely valuable and difficult book with a short account of how Wittgenstein reacts to the central thesis of the *Tractatus*, namely, analysis and allied issues.

The theory developed in the *Tractatus* and rejected in the investigations is closely related to medieval realism (about universals) and to what has recently been termed "essentialism".² This theory may be put briefly in the following way. Only names have meaning. The meaning of a word is correlated with the word. It is the object for which the word stands. Objects are definite and absolutely simple. Propositions are combinations of such names. Consequently, language contains logical forms, which are concealed by ordinary language. The essence is hidden from us. Our task is to exhibit the hidden form -- the essence of language and reality -- by reductive analysis. Analysis reveals the real structure of both language and reality. Language is thus the picture of the world. And learning a language consists in giving names to objects. Wittgenstein criticises these ideas in the *Philosophical Investigations*. The central idea is concerned with analysis. It may look as if there were something like a final analysis of our forms of language, and so a single completely resolved form of every expression. "This finds expression in questions as to the essence of language, of propositions, of thought....." something that

G. Feysabend, P., 'Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, PA. Vol. 64, 1953, p. 449.

lies within, which we see when we look into the thing, and which an analysis digs out.³ This view maintains that thought is surrounded by a halo. Its essence presents an order -- an a priori order -- common to both the world and language. The essence must be utterly simple and prior to all experience. It must run through all experience, and no empirical cloudiness can affect it. It must rather be of the purest crystal.⁴ We are under the illusion, says Wittgenstein, that what is profound and essential is the essence. We think that there must be a perfect order even in the vaguest expression.⁵ It never occurs to us to examine our actual language, and see if this is so. We want to say that there cannot be any vagueness in logic. But "The more narrowly we examine actual language, the sharper becomes the conflict between it and our requirement."⁶ The preconceived idea of crystalline purity can only be removed by turning our whole examination round.⁷ Let us examine, then, essentialism in detail.

In the Blue and Brown Books, Wittgenstein says, that our "craving for generality" and "contemptuous attitude towards the particular case,"⁸ is responsible for the above view of language and reality. We are misled by certain apparent similarities to postulate common functions and common

3. PI, Sec. 92.
 4. PI, Sec. 97.
 5. PI, Sec. 98.
 6. PI, Sec. 107.
 7. PI, Sec. 108.
 8. BB, pp. 17-18.

characteristics. We assimilate words and sentences to a limited number of cases (paradigms or models). We assume, for instance, that all sentences function like 'The cat is on the mat'; that all nouns function like 'tree'; that all verbs function like 'run'; and that there are sentences corresponding to general words. As Wittgenstein says, a picture holds us captive.

Wittgenstein starts with the discussion of a particular view of language, namely, the view that maintains that the main (or the only) function of language is to describe facts or situations. Language is descriptive. He said in the *Tractatus* : "The general form of a proposition is: This is how things stand", (T 4.5(31)). In his later works he realizes that we are misled by our craving for generality which results in unwarranted assimilations. In the first 33 sections which are concerned with meaning, Wittgenstein is anxious to make us see, "the multiplicity of kinds of words and sentences."⁹ We are prone to assimilation. We assimilate different kinds. Let us see first, how we assimilate different kinds of sentences. We divide sentences into a limited number of grammatical types and think that a particular sentence-type has a unique function. The function of a sentence is determined by its grammatical form. We think that all declarative sentences describe in the same way; all interrogative sentences function in the same way; and so on.

⁹ PI, Sec. 23.

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⁹ P.I, Sec. 23.

This is a grave mistake. Wittgenstein says in the section 21 that "five slabs" functions both as a report and as an order -- the difference being only in the application. To take a different instance, it is commonly thought that the sentences in the interrogative mood are always used for asking questions. But the sentence "Is not the weather glorious -- to-day?", is used as a statement. Similarly, "May I come in?" is used to beg permission. "You will do it", is used as a command, not as a report or prophecy. From these considerations Wittgenstein derives the following conclusions :

- (i) The grammatical form of a sentence does not always tell us the function it is used to express. A sentence of a particular grammatical form may be used for various purposes. What is important then, is the application and not the grammatical form.
- (ii) It is totally wrong to maintain that a significant language has only one function, namely, to describe states of affairs. Wittgenstein says :

But how many kinds of sentences are there? Say assertion, question, and command? -- There are countless kinds : countless different kinds of use of what we call "symbols", "words", "sentences". And this multiplicity is not something fixed, given once for all; but new types of language, new language -- games, as we may say, come into existence, and others become obsolete and forgotten. (We can get a right picture of this from the changes in mathematics)

Review the multiplicity of language-games in the following examples, and in others :
Giving orders, and obeying them --
Describing the appearance of an object, or giving its measurements --

Constructing an object from a description (a drawing) --
Reporting an event --
Speculating about an event --
Forming and testing a hypothesis --
Presenting the results of an experiment in tables and diagrams --
Making up a story; and reading it --
Play-acting --
Singing catches --
Guessing riddles --
Making a joke; telling it --
Solving a problem in practical arithmetic --
Translating from one language into another --
Asking, thanking, cursing, greeting, praying.

PI, Sec. 23.

Not only this. Wittgenstein says at Section 24 that even "description" means different things in different contexts. There is no common characteristic which all descriptive expressions share. In his own words :

Think how many different kinds of thing are called "description" : description of a body's position by means of its co-ordinates; description of a facial expression; description of a sensation of touch; of a need.

PI, Sec. 24.

What Wittgenstein is trying to drive us home is that words and sentences are used in a wide variety of ways; and it is simply impossible to classify them grammatically in a way which can help us to know their functions. There is no a priori road from grammar to the functions of words and sentences. Our language is intermixed with our behaviour, and, for this reason, as wide in its tasks as our needs.

Before we pass on to things and words, a minor comment is in order. Stravinsky, in his review of the Philosophical

investigations, makes a very pertinent point. He says : "It would be absurd to speak of different sentences here, let alone of different kinds of sentences. We might speak of different uses of the sentence, though it would be better to speak of different linguistic activities in each of which the sentence occurred".¹⁰ 'Kinds of sentences' could be significant in connection with the formal (grammatical) classification of sentences. In reference to application or use, it makes no sense to talk of the kinds of sentences. But we must not forget that Wittgenstein is criticising here a particular view of language which divides sentences into certain kinds (formally or grammatically), which are supposed to correspond to 'differences in use'. It is in order to break the hold of this idea that he says that there are countless kinds of sentences. But what he really means, as is evident from the shift from 'kinds of sentence' to 'kinds of use', is that sentences are used in countless ways. It would not be a deviation to refer to another point made by Hyle in his article 'Ordinary Language'.¹¹ He says that we do not speak of the 'use' of sentences -- only words are used. But there is nothing absurd to talk of the 'use' of sentences. We certainly use them. It is, however, correct to say that "we cannot talk about the functions or uses of words in the same sort of way as we can talk about the functions or uses of sentences."¹²

10. Strawson, P.F., 'Philosophical Investigations', Mind, Vol. LXIII, 1954, p. 72.

11. Hyle, G., 'Ordinary Language', PM, April, 1963, pp. 176-180.

12. Strawson, P.F., 'Philosophical Investigations', Mind, 1954, p. 73.

Let us now consider essentialism in relation to things and words. Our craving for generality, or, what Wittgenstein says in the *Philosophical Investigations*, the tendency to sublime the logic of language¹³ leads us to essentialism. We assume that there is something common to all horses, for instance. Unless something is common to all horses, we tend to argue, they could not be members of the same class of animals. Yes, there must be something common to all of them which makes them horses. Everything has an essence, which alone can make it what it is. We can understand the force of this argument still clearly, if we look at the matter from the side of the words. It is generally held that words have the same meaning in all their uses. That is to say, a general word has a unitary meaning. For example, the term 'game' must refer to some essence which would be its meaning. To say in another way, all general names stand for some characteristics, which are common to all things denoted by them.

Wittgenstein has rejected these claims unreservedly. He says that our tendency to sublime the logic of language makes us see only similarities; differences are just overlooked. This is an important source of the philosophical mistakes. Once he remarked to a friend that he had considered using as a motto for the *Philosophical Investigations* a line from *King Lear* -- "I'll teach you differences."¹³

¹³ Drury, M.O's, "Ludwig Wittgenstein : a symposium", *The Listener*, Jan. 28, 1960.

What Wittgenstein is trying to impress upon his readers is that instead of assuming that there must be something common to all things to which a general term applies, one has to examine whether they all have it. When this is done, we find, there is no characteristic which is necessarily present in all objects. There is no common essence. As an illustration Wittgenstein examines games. His conclusion is that if we look at all the things (or activities) called 'games', we find that there is nothing which must be present in every game. We find only similarities. It is useful to give his own analysis :

Consider for example the proceedings that we call "games". I mean board-games, card-games, ball-games, Olympic games, and so on. What is common to them all? Don't say: "There must be something common, or they would not be called 'games'." -- but look and see whether there is anything common to all -- For if you look at them you will not see something that is common to all, but similarities, relationships, and a whole series of them at that. To repeat: don't think, but look! -- Look for example at board-games, with their multifarious relationships. Now pass to card-games; here you find many correspondences with the first group, but many common features drop out, and others appear. When we pass next to ball-games, much that is common is retained, but much is lost. -- Are they all 'amusing'? Compare chess with draughts and croquet. Or is there always winning and losing, or competition between players? Think of patience. In ball-games there is winning and losing; but when a child throws his ball at the wall and catches it again, this feature has disappeared. Look at the parts played by skill and luck; and at the difference between skill in chess and skill in tennis. Think now of games like ring-a-ring-a-roses; here is the element of amusement, but how many other characteristic features have disappeared! And we can go through the many, many other groups of games in the same way; can see how similarities crop up and disappear.

And the result of this examination is: we see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and

criss-crossing : sometimes overall similarities,
sometimes similarities of detail.

PI, Sec. 66.

Having failed to realise this, the Platonists and the idealists postulate the existence of real forms and concrete universals respectively. But the crucial problem is: if there are no common characteristics, how can we use a term to refer to so many things? That is to say, if card-games, board-games and ball-games have no essential characteristic which they all share, what warrant we have to use the word 'game' for all of them? Bishop Berkley, who was convinced of the absurdity of the doctrines of the realists and the conceptualists, put forward a new suggestion : a particular thing is used -- to say in very general terms -- to represent all individuals of a certain class. This suggestion, however, is as absurd as those it was intended to replace.

Let us then turn to Wittgenstein's analysis for a satisfactory way out. In his opinion, although things have no common essence, they have "family resemblances". "Games",
14
the performances under discussion here, form a family. We use a term for a number of things, not because they have some essence in common, but because they have certain similarities. Wittgenstein thus, exposes the traditional theories about things, and destroys them completely.

14. PI, Sec. 67.

The same conclusion is reached from the side of words. Looked from this side, it can be said that no word is used in a language on the basis of unitary connotation. That is to say, words do not have essential characteristics as their meanings. A word is used to refer to a wide range of things. We can never say that these are the essential properties, which must be present in all the things. The basis for its use is similarities. Let us consider the term 'lemon'.¹⁵ Lemons have certain characteristics, say, a, b, c, d, e, etc. If an object has all these properties, it is definitely a lemon; but if something lacks one or more of them, say, b and c, it may still be a lemon. If due to change of certain conditions lemon trees started producing fruits of a pinkish colour and with a sweet taste (two characteristics which were not covered by a, b, c, d, e etc.), but having all the other characteristics of lemons, these fruits would still be lemons. There is no one property, or group of properties, which is essential for the things called lemon. A lemon must have only most of the properties which are generally found in lemons.

One may get the impression that Wittgenstein denies the possibility of unitary and fixed meanings under all situations. But this is certainly a wrong impression. Wittgenstein would not deny that for special purposes it is

15. Note : This example is taken from Michael Scriven's "The Logic of Criteria", published in The Journal of Philosophy, LVI, 1959, pp. 337-68.

possible to stipulate unitary and fixed meanings. But even in these special cases, he would say, the possibility of change cannot be a priori ruled out. With the advancement of knowledge the fixed meaning is bound to be changed.

Wittgenstein thus shows that words have no unitary and fixed meanings. To the extent he is successful in criticising these theses, "he has dealt a powerful blow against the traditional view of essentialism."¹⁶

But it may be pointed out that essentialism cannot be completely eliminated at least from language. It may be said that all names do name something, that all descriptive sentences do describe something. Wittgenstein would certainly concede these points. He would never deny that language contains both name-words and descriptive sentences. What he is rejecting is the claim that all name-words function in the same way, or, that all descriptive sentences describe in one fixed way. Moreover, these are only one kind of language-games. They cannot be models for others. Wittgenstein's main purpose is to make us realize that language has no fixed use. We must not allow our intelligence to be bewitched by language.

The central point, Wittgenstein has tried to explain throughout his later works, is that if we study language without prejudice, and look at the way words are actually

16. Pitcher, G., The Philosophy of Wittgenstein, p. 221.

used, the mystery of meaning will evaporate. We can aid our understanding and preserve our balance, he maintains, if we consider some possible uses. But these possible languages, unlike that of the earlier Wittgenstein or Carnap's artificial calculi, are a mode of social behavior. In his later works Wittgenstein replaces the picture theory of meaning by the tool theory of language. "Language is an instrument. Its concepts are instruments."¹⁷ He asks to think of the tools in a tool-box. There is a hammer, pliers, a saw, a screw-driver, a rule, a glue-pot, glue, nails and screws. "The functions of words are as diverse as the functions of these objects. (And in both cases there are similarities)."¹⁸ It is, therefore, important to look at the different functions that the words are used to perform. What misleads us is the grammatical similarity. "What confuses us is the uniform appearance of words when we hear them spoken or meet them in script and print. For their application is not presented to us so clearly. Especially when we are doing philosophy!"¹⁹ To take another example of different applications of things which look similar, look into the cabin of a locomotive. We see handles all looking more or less alike. But one is the handle of a crank which can be moved continuously; another is the handle of a switch, it is either off or on; a third is the handle of a brake-liner; a fourth, the handle of a pump, it has an effect only so long

17. PI, Sec. 569.

18. PI, Sec. 11.

19. PI, Sec. 11.

as it is moved to and fro. ²⁰ Similarly, words and sentences may be alike in their appearance (form), but they have different functions. To say "every word in language signifies something", is to say nothing whatever, unless we also explain what exact distinction we wish to make. It is like saying "all tools serve to modify something". Do we know anything about the functions of tools by this statement? Naming is not the essence of language. It is mere attaching ²¹ labels to things. Language is like an ancient city which ²² has both old and new houses without any uniform planning. Language is woven with all human activities. To imagine ²³ a language means to imagine a form of life. When we fail to bear these points in mind -- which usually happens while doing philosophy -- we get our understanding tied up in knots, we suffer brain cramps. We are trapped by grammatical similarities which prevent us from seeing differences of functions. The only cure is to look at the actual use of words. Once we "command a clear view" of the uses of a word, ²⁴ our philosophical problems are solved. Philosophical problems arise when philosophy interferes with the actual use of words. The proper business of philosophy is only to describe it. ²⁵

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- 20. PI, Sec. 12.
 - 21. PI, Sec. 16.
 - 22. PI, Sec. 18.
 - 23. PI, Sec. 19.
 - 24. PI, Sec. 122.
 - 25. PI, Sec. 124.

Let us, then, see what Wittgenstein means by the use of words. It is one of the most central notions in the writings of the later Wittgenstein. Before we proceed further, we must guard ourselves against a possible misunderstanding. One may think that by the use of a word Wittgenstein means the grammatical aspect of the word in question. One can use a word in sentences or frame a word-group, only if one knows the grammar of the word. For instance, knowing how to use a word includes knowing in what sort of linguistic contexts the word can or cannot occur. In other words, we can claim to know the use of a word, if we know how to construct sentences which contain that word.

At certain passages Wittgenstein seems to support this view. He says, "Our investigation is therefore a grammatical one."²⁶ But here Wittgenstein is not using the term 'grammatical' in its ordinary sense. He is using it in "an extremely broad sense, to mean simply linguistic."²⁷ He makes a distinction between linguistic and empirical investigations; and identifies philosophical activities with the former. It is in this sense, that he describes his investigation as a grammatical one. This is evident from another distinction which he makes between "surface grammar" and "depth grammar".²⁸ By "surface grammar", he means, grammar in its normal or ordinary sense. When he asks us to examine

²⁶. PI, Sec. 90.

²⁷. Fitcher, G., The Philosophy of Wittgenstein, p.237.

²⁸. PI, Sec. 664.

the use of a word, he is not interested in this grammatical aspect of the word in question. On the contrary, he believes that grammar (in its normal sense) is misleading. It imposes rather oversimplifications on language. He warns us against the "troublesome features in our grammar" and "grammatical illusions."²⁹ It means, by the use of a word Wittgenstein means something else.

Wittgenstein connects the notion of 'use' with that of 'language-game'. When he urges to examine the use of a word, he refers to language-games played with the word in question. Using language (words and sentences) is, for him, playing language-games. Malcolm reports an interesting incident that sheds light on the origin of this idea :

"One day when Wittgenstein was passing a field where a football match was in progress the thought first struck him that in language we play games with words."³¹

Wittgenstein says that the various ways in which language is used are specific language-games; for example, giving orders, reporting an event play-acting, asking, greeting, etc. He is never tired of emphasising the great variety of language-games; the different uses for which language is employed. We are misled, when instead of looking at the multifarious uses

29. *IB*, p. 49.

30. *PI*, Sec. 110.

31. Malcolm, *B.*, Ludwig Wittgenstein : A Memoir, p. 66.

of language, we come forward with some unique explanation that claims to reveal the essence of language. No theory of meaning, which is framed a priori, can do justice to the actual working of language. What is needed is rather description. We can only look into the workings of our language. When this is adopted, we find that everything is 'open to view.'³² Nothing is hidden.

Under the notion of language-game, Wittgenstein includes all the relevant aspects of the use of words.³³ An important factor in selecting the analogy of 'game', is to point out, that if we examine all sorts of games we find nothing which is common to all of them, and there is no fixed boundary; the word 'game' is not 'closed by a frontier'. Similarly, language is devoid of essences, and words, except in special cases, have no fixed boundaries. The term 'language-game' is used to emphasize the vagueness of ordinary language.

To break the hold of the notion that the meaning of a word is something unique and mysterious and is linked up with the word (which is its vehicle) inexplicably, Wittgenstein says that "the meaning of a word is its use in the language."³⁴ He discusses this point throughout the Philosophical Investigations. In the very first section he says,

32. PI, Sec. 126.

33. Note : Pitcher distinguishes the following aspects: (a) grammatical aspect; (b) semantic aspect; (c) speech act aspect and (d) speech activities aspect. The Philosophy of Wittgenstein, pp. 230-235.

34. PI, Sec. 43.

while discussing the example of 'five red apples':

But what is the meaning of the word "five"? -- No such thing was in question here, only how the word "five" is used.

PI, Sec. 1

Wittgenstein imagines another language-game to illustrate the same point. The language is meant to serve for communication between a builder A and an assistant B. A is building with building-stones: there are blocks, pillars, slabs and beams. When A says "slabs" B brings them. It is then correct to say that the meaning of "slab" does not consist in the objects it names, but in the way it is used in a language. A, for instance, is not naming the object slab, but asking B to bring it.

In this connection he criticizes both the naming theory of meaning and the ostensive definition. He says that an ostensive definition can be variously interpreted in every case.³⁵ If someone has to explain the meaning of a word, pointing to an object will not do. If one points to something to explain the meaning of a word to a child, the latter may understand by it either the shape, or the colour, or the material or anything else connected with it; but not its role in a language-game. Generally an ostensive definition is employed to clear up a misunderstanding. It is supposed that pointing

takes us beyond the risk of misunderstanding, by indicating precisely the object. But we can misunderstand what somebody is pointing at. Wittgenstein says that it depends on the circumstances -- that is, on what happened before and after the pointing -- that one succeeds in explaining the specific purpose of pointing.³⁶ However, pointing in itself does not guarantee success. What guarantees success is the fact that the learner can play all the language-games in which the word he is learning occurs.

We may now discuss Wittgenstein's notion of "language-game" more precisely. He says :

I shall also call the whole, consisting of language and the actions into which it is woven, the "language-game."

PI, Sec. 7

In point of fact a language-game is a use of language for some purpose. Language is not something artificially constructed for the use of philosophers. Language is rather an instrument. That is to say, speaking a language and understanding it, is a matter of being "able to do a variety of things, to act or behave in certain ways -- and to do so under the appropriate conditions."³⁷ Thus speaking a language is engaging in certain modes of behaviour. It is to engage in "forms of life", and "to imagine a language means to imagine

36. PI, Sec. 35.

37. Fitcher, G., The Philosophy of Wittgenstein, p. 242.

a form of life."³⁸ Words are not only like games; we actually play games with them. Words are pieces used in various language-games. The meaning of a word is determined by its roles in the various language-games in which it occurs, the kind of behaviour in which its use is embodied. It gets its meaning, so to say, from these modes of behaviour. Wittgenstein once said : "An expression has meaning only in the stream of life."³⁹ Wittgenstein, thus, believes that language is almost inseparably connected with life. But it does not mean that some sort of non-linguistic activity is always essential for the use of a word. In the long list which he gives at section 33, he mentions even those activities which are purely linguistic, namely, telling a joke, reporting an event etc. Under the notion of language-game, he includes both linguistic and non-linguistic activities. Using the terms given by Pitcher,⁴⁰ we can call the former (which consist entirely, or virtually entirely, in the use of words) pure language-games, and the latter (which include non-linguistic behaviour as important parts) impure language-games. The word 'impure' has no pejorative force, and the difference between pure and impure language-games is not hard and fast. Linguistic behaviour is not entirely independent of the other modes of behaviour. On the contrary, Wittgenstein

38. PI, Sec. 19.

39. Malcolm, E., : Memoir, p. 83.

40. Pitcher, G., The Philosophy of Wittgenstein, p. 240.

believes that in a certain sense, impure language-games are basic, and holds that "pure language-games are parasitic⁴¹ upon them in a crucial way."

What he is insisting on is that we cannot learn or understand an expression if it is devoid of all connections with human behaviour. Wittgenstein explains this point excellently when he says, "If a lion could talk, we could⁴² not understand him". We could not understand the lion because he does not share our forms of life. We must know the situations in which an expression is used. But it does not mean that there are no pure language-games. What Wittgenstein is trying to impress upon us, is the fact that even pure language-games are directly or indirectly dependent upon impure language-games. However, when Wittgenstein says that language is related to human behaviour and that to imagine a language means to imagine a form of life, he uses the term behaviour in a very wide sense.

Commanding, questioning, recounting, chatting, are as much a part of our natural history as walking, eating, drinking, playing.

PI, Sec. 25.

To talk is to behave in certain ways. Sometimes our behaviour is simply linguistic, but mostly it is embedded in non-linguistic activities. Both purely linguistic behaviour

41. Ibid, p. 240.

42. PI, p. 223.

and non-linguistic behaviour are essential to Wittgenstein's conception of a language-game. But it seems that for him impure language-games "lie in the background" when words are used in pure ones.⁴³ Whatever may be the case, Wittgenstein asserts emphatically that words derive their meanings from the language-games which are their 'original homes'.

When philosophers use a word -- "knowledge", "being", "object", "I", "proposition", "name" -- and try to grasp the essence of the thing, one must always ask oneself: is the word ever actually used in this way in the language-game which is its original home!

What we do is to bring words from their metaphysical to their everyday use.

PI, Sec. 116.

If we forget that words derive their meanings from the language-games which are their original homes, and that there are intimate connections between language and behaviour (either linguistic or non-linguistic), and try to treat words in isolation from the actual practical situations in which they are used, we end up in paradoxes and puzzlement.

.....philosophical problems arise when language goes on holiday.

PI, Sec. 38.

The confusions which occupy us arise when language is like an engine idling, not when it is doing work.

PI, Sec. 132.

43. Fitcher, G., The Philosophy of Wittgenstein, p. 243.

That is to say, philosophers isolate words from the language-games in which they occur in ordinary language. And this leads to misunderstandings and confusions. Wittgenstein discusses this point by taking an example from Augustine's⁴⁴ Confessions. Nobody feels any puzzlement when temporal words are used in the actual discourse. Everybody knows what it means to do something within a certain period of time, for instance. We feel no philosophical trouble while discussing the year, or even the exact date, when some important event took place in the past. There is no possibility of confusion if somebody asks me to tell him time by looking at my wrist watch. But the moment the question "what is time?" is asked, we find it impossible to say anything clearly. This question has been isolated from the language-games which are its original home. It has no connection with the actual situations in which the temporal words are normally used. The language has gone on holiday. When the word 'time' is, thus isolated, what is done is to treat it on the pattern of certain analogies. Some picture holds us captive, so to say. In this case, for example, the word 'time' is classified with noun-words that stand for some continuous process, e.g. 'river' or 'line'. The philosophical problem, then, concerning time⁴⁵ is to discover the nature of this quasi-physical stream. Wittgenstein holds that if there is a philosophical problem,

44. PI, Secs. 89-90.

45. Fitcher, G., The Philosophy of Wittgenstein, p. 245.

we need not discuss the expressions connected with it in isolation. We need rather look at the actual use of these expressions.⁴⁶

Wittgenstein's purpose in insisting on the use of a word is to destroy the myth that its role in language is determined by strict logical rules. To destroy this myth, he discusses the role of rules in language. David Pole commenting on the analogy of game says, "It serves him first in that a game is usually a form of social activity in which different players fill different roles; secondly in that games observe rules."⁴⁷ And further,

"A language is a pattern of activities governed by rules."⁴⁸

"Grammar, in Wittgenstein's sense, is the structure of language, or, seen differently, its system of rules."⁴⁹

"Broadly the thesis is that a language, like a mathematical system, consists of a complex set of procedures, which may also be appealed to as rules."⁵⁰

"We are to think of two factors in language; on the one hand particular moves or practices which are assessed by appeal to the rules, and on the other hand those rules themselves. Beyond these there is no further

46. PI, Sec. 116.

47. Pole, D., The Later Philosophy of Wittgenstein, p. 38.

48. Ibid, p. 39.

49. Ibid, p. 31.

appeal; they are things we merely accept or adopt."

All these passages selected from Pole's book tend to read something which Wittgenstein never holds in his later works. As Stanley Cavell has pointed out, Pole's account of Wittgenstein's views "is not merely wrong, but misses the fact that Wittgenstein's ideas form a sustained and radical criticism of such views"⁵² Pole's interpretation suggests that the notion of language-game is employed to show that it consists of a set of procedures which may also be appealed to as rules. The correctness or incorrectness of an expression is determined by the rules of the language in which that expression is used. For every "move" within a language there are certain rules which can be appealed to, to determine its correctness. And where a rule does apply, it is obvious whether it has been followed or flouted. Consequently, if such a move is made which is not covered by the existing rules, it violates the procedures of the game. It is an indefensible alteration. In short, rules are the highest court of appeal, Pole seems to suggest, to determine the correctness or incorrectness of the use of language.

No doubt, what Wittgenstein has to say about games, rules, correctness, justification etc., is difficult enough, "but not sufficiently so that one must hesitate before saying that Pole has not tried to understand what Wittgenstein has

51. Ibid, p. 62.

52. Cavell, S., "Wittgenstein's Later Philosophy",
 PR, Jan. 62, p. 70.

most painfully wished to say about language (and meaning and understanding)".⁵³ Pole forgets that one of the central themes of the later Wittgenstein is that ordinary language does not depend upon exact rules. The analogy of game is, rather, employed to show that words and sentences are vague and have no fixed boundaries. Wittgenstein maintained in the *Treatatus* that language is impossible without exact logical forms. He conceived language, there, as the model of a calculus with fixed rules. But the most important aim of the later Wittgenstein is to demolish this artificial notion of language.

Wittgenstein uses the analogy of game to insist on the fact that we do not proceed according to definite rules either in games or in language. Talking about "game", he says, "It is not everywhere circumscribed by rules"⁵⁴ He further explains that if we cannot give boundaries, it does not amount to ignorance. "We do not know the boundaries because none have been drawn."⁵⁵ Of course, we can draw a boundary for a special purpose. But that does not make the concept usable (except for that special purpose). What is important is the context. "Following a rule" is itself an activity which is learned against the background of innumerable other activities. The concept of rule does not exhaust the concept of correctness or justification. Rule itself can

53. *Ibid.*, p. 70.

54. *PI*, Sec. 63.

55. *PI*, Sec. 63.

be misinterpreted. ⁵⁶ Wittgenstein goes further to maintain that in the more strict sense rules do not "determine" what a game (or use) is. We do not explain what playing a game is by "listing rules". ⁵⁷ Playing a game is a part of our natural history. ⁵⁸ We can learn a game without formulating its rules. ⁵⁹ Even where there are explicit rules "it can be said that what we call a rule of a language-game may have very different roles in the game." ⁶⁰ Finally, the most important point behind the analogy of game is to destroy the myth that there is a set of characteristics which every game shares. There is no one set of characteristics determined by rules. ⁶¹ Language has no essence.

Wittgenstein tells us that "following a rule" is as much dependent on "practice" as "playing a game" is. ⁶² It is not possible that there should have been only one occasion on which someone obeyed a rule. "To obey a rule, to make a report, to give an order, to play a game of chess, are customs (uses, institutions)." ⁶³ That means, rules are not enough. It must be possible to know whether a particular rule is obeyed or infringed. And this is possible by looking at the actual cases. Wittgenstein says :

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56. Cavell, S., 'Wittgenstein's Later Philosophy : Pfl.
Jan. 62, p. 71.
57. PI, Sec. 59.
58. PI, Sec. 31.
59. PI, Sec. 83.
60. PI, Sec. 66.
61. PI, Sec. 199.
62. PI, Sec. 199.

And hence also 'obeying a rule' is a practice. And to think one is obeying a rule is not to obey a rule. Hence it is not possible to obey a rule 'privately'; otherwise thinking one was obeying a rule would be the same thing as obeying it.

PI, Sec. 202.

Whether a rule is obeyed or not is decided by reference to what Wittgenstein describes in the Blue Book as "conventions,"⁶³ and in the Philosophical Investigations as "forms of life."⁶⁴ Thus conventions or forms of life are for Wittgenstein the highest court of appeal, not rules. Even an unknown language⁶⁵ is interpreted by reference to our common behaviour.

By analysing the concepts of 'game' and 'rule', Wittgenstein shows that our talk of language as a fixed symbolism misleads us, and that the "appeal to rules" as an explanation of language is futile.

The man who is philosophically puzzled sees a law (rule) in the way a word is used, and, trying to apply this law consistently comes up against cases where it leads to paradoxical results.

BB, p. 27.

We learn and teach words and sentences in certain contexts which are the original home of meaning. It is, therefore, important to look at the contexts, both linguistic and non-linguistic in which words are used. The meaning of a word is not something unique and mythical. What is important

63. BB, p. 24.

64. PI, Sec. 23.

65. PI, Sec. 207.

is the stream of life from which words derive their meanings.

Before we pass on to other important issues, let us consider certain objections raised against Wittgenstein's view of language and meaning. In conformity with his conception of the philosophical activity, he does not discuss fully the notion of use. As is his wont, he leaves it vague. But he has been interpreted as giving a particular doctrine about meaning of words as he did in the *Tractatus*. It has been said that Wittgenstein identifies the meaning of a word with its use(s) in language. Accepting this interpretation, the following objections, among others, are raised to show that this identification is mistaken :

(i) In non-linguistic areas, things which have uses (e.g., tools, instruments) normally cannot be said to have meanings. And things which may be said to have meanings, or things which sometimes mean something (e.g., black clouds on the horizon, footprints in the snow, the rising pitch of someone's voice) do not, except rarely, have uses. ⁶⁶

(ii) Similarly in language the connections between meaning and use do not hold universally, much less necessarily. It is quite possible to know the meaning of a word and yet not know its use, and to know the use without knowing the meaning. ⁶⁷

(iii) There is always more meaning in an expression than we have given it. ⁶⁸

66. Pitcher, G., *The Philosophy of Wittgenstein*, pp. 251-52.

67. *Ibid.*, p. 252.

68. Feys, D., *The Later Philosophy of Wittgenstein*, p. 83.

On these grounds Pitcher and Polo maintain that meaning cannot be identified with use. But they draw different conclusions. While Polo labels the charge of conservatism against Wittgenstein's conception of the philosophical activity,⁶⁹ Pitcher says, "I do not think that Wittgenstein's mistake here, if it is one, has any very serious consequences for his philosophy."⁷⁰

Before we come to the central question, concerning the identification of meaning and use, it is profitable to discuss the first and second points. In the first point, Pitcher tries to show that in the non-linguistic areas, things which have uses cannot be said to have meaning, and things which are said to mean something have no use. In the first place, Wittgenstein is concerned with language, not with the alleged meaning and use of things in non-linguistic areas. 'Use' and 'meaning', are not usually used in the same sense in language in which these terms are used in non-linguistic areas. Moreover, in non-linguistic areas, as Pitcher himself maintains things which have uses have no meaning, and things which are taken to mean something have no use. But in language, barring certain exceptions, expressions have both meaning and use. It means, if a word has both meaning and use, no one can claim to have understood its meaning in the full sense of the term, unless he knows how to use that word in different language-

69. Ibid, p. 97.

70. Pitcher, G., The Philosophy of Wittgenstein, p. 201.

games which are played with it. There is, thus, a necessary relation between meaning and use in language, which is lacking in non-linguistic areas. Hence no convincing conclusion can be drawn from the truths concerning meaning and use in non-linguistic areas, which could describe the meaning and use of a word in language.

In the second place, Pitcher tries to criticise the identification of meaning and use by pointing out that "it is possible to know the meaning of a word and yet not know its use, and to know the use without knowing the meaning."⁷¹ As an example of the former, a non-Latin speaker may know that 'ultus' means revenge in Latin, but he may not know when or how to use it. We may take an example of the latter: most people know how to use the sign 'Q.E.D.' yet far fewer know its meaning. I feel that Pitcher is saying something which Wittgenstein would never wish to reject. Of course one may know the dictionary-meaning of a word without knowing its use. Similarly, one may somehow learn a particular use of an expression without understanding its meaning. But it does not follow from these facts that anyone can claim to know the meaning of a word without knowing its uses in the language, i.e., the language-games played with it; nor is it plausible to maintain that one can use an expression without knowing its meaning in some sense. If a word has both meaning and use, one can claim to know the word fully

71. Pitcher, G., The Philosophy of Wittgenstein, p. 288.

only if he knows both of them. Pitcher misses this point because he selects as his examples non-English expressions. The important thing is not the question whether it is possible to know the meaning of a word without knowing its use(s), or the use(s) without knowing its meaning. What is rather important is the question whether the meaning of a word can be determined independently of its uses in language. It is, thus, the relation of the meaning and uses of a word with which Wittgenstein is concerned.

Granted that the meaning of a word and its use are necessarily related, does it follow from this that meaning and use are identical? One can maintain with Cole, that there is always more meaning in an expression than we have given it (the third point given above), i.e., the meaning of a word is not exhausted by its uses. Although an expression has both meaning and use, yet the former is something unique, the objector might say, which is only illustrated by the latter and never identical with it. Wittgenstein has failed to establish the thesis that the meaning of a word is identical with its use.

I must say at the outset that Wittgenstein has no thesis to establish. His aim is only to describe how words get their meanings. In the *Tractatus* he identified the meaning of a word with the object referred to by it. Similarly, one may get the impression, he identifies the meaning of an expression with its use, in his later works. But this impression is not correct. The statement which strengthens

this impression is the following :

For a large class of cases - though not for all - in which we employ the word "meaning" it can be defined thus : the meaning of a word is its use in the language.

PI, Sec. 43.

Interpreted literally he seems here to identify "meaning" and "use" for a large class of cases -- though not for all, as he explicitly asserts. But the real import of his assertion is that for a large class of cases "meaning" is determined by "use". The central question is : how an expression gets its meaning? The traditional answer is that an expression gets its meaning in some unique way; and that its meaning is a halo surrounding the expression, or something mystical. All the uses of an expression are simply illustrations of its meaning which consists of some essential characteristics. Wittgenstein himself succumbed to this view in his earlier works. He now realizes that neither the way in which an expression gets its meaning nor its meaning is something unique and mystical. Words derive their meaning from the language-games, which are played with them. It is the use that gives meaning to an expression -- not definitions, ostensive or verbal. Since words are not used in exact and fixed ways, they do not have unitary meanings. To rid of the prejudice that words have unitary meanings, Wittgenstein insists to look at their actual uses. In some sense it is possible for me to know the meaning of a word without knowing its use. But it does not prove that its

meaning is independent of its uses. The meaning of a word that I know, with the help of a dictionary or otherwise, is given to it by its uses and conventions.

However, the important issue is not whether "meaning" is identical with "use". What Wittgenstein is emphasising is rather the view that the philosophical activity is concerned with the use of words. In order to understand the nature of the philosophical problems, we must look at the actual uses of the expressions in which they are expressed. We must bring words, as he says, from the metaphysical to their everyday use. It is the use of a philosophical term that is important. This is how Wisdom and Strawson have interpreted Wittgenstein's central theme. Wisdom says,⁷² "Don't ask for the meaning, ask for the use." And in the words of Strawson, "One might get the impression that he was saying : In philosophy you want the meaning of the word. Don't look for the mythical, uniquely related term, but look at the use; for that is the meaning (cf. 43). But in view of the natural place of 'meaning', it might be better to say : In doing philosophy, it cannot be that you are ignorant of the meaning : what you want to know is the use."⁷³ Whatever be the relation between the meaning and use of a word, in philosophy it is the use(s) that matters.

72. Wisdom, J., "Ludwig Wittgenstein" *Mind*, Lxi, No. 242, April 1952, p. 258.

73. Strawson, P.F., 'Philosophical Investigations', *Mind*, Vol. Lxiii, 1954, p. 71.

This is what Wittgenstein actually does. Talking about the word "five" in a simple language-game, he says :

But what is the meaning of the word "five"? No such thing was in question here, only how the word "five" is used.

PI, Sec. 1.

Wittgenstein tells us that if we command a clear view of how words are used in various language-games, we shall free ourselves from the puzzlement. We shall no longer assume that our language functions in one way only. We shall no longer believe that the meaning of a word is something mysterious and unique. We shall no longer be guided by models and paradigms.

Having demolished the myth that the meaning of a word is something unique and mysterious, given to it independently of its uses in the language, Wittgenstein examines another misleading feature of the traditional doctrines of meaning, namely, meaning and understanding as mental activities. It is believed that words in themselves are lifeless. I.e., they are either vibrations in the air or marks on paper. Wittgenstein believed in the *Tractatus* that a picture in itself says nothing, it is rather made to represent something. In other words, we intend a picture -- a linguistic expression -- to say something. Words in themselves are, it is believed, merely dead signs. There must be, therefore, something in addition to linguistic expressions, it is argued, which can give them meaning. The speaker intends his words

to mean something. Meaning is thus a mental activity. In order to say something definitely the speaker must not only utter or write a sentence, he must also mean something by it. There must be some thought behind the words. Similarly, the hearer must not only hear or read the words, he must, it is said, understand them -- some process must occur in his mind. He must grasp the thought behind the language. He must be able to understand the intended meaning. For example, when a person is given an order, we say that he must understand it before he can carry it out. In other words, a mental act or process of understanding must occur in his mind prior to his overt activity. Wittgenstein puts these points with great clarity :

But isn't it our meaning it that gives sense to the sentence? (And here, of course, belongs the fact that one cannot mean a senseless series of words). And 'meaning it' is something in the sphere of the mind. But it is also something private! It is the intangible something, only comparable to consciousness itself.

PI, Sec. 358.

Let us try to understand now how this thesis comes into existence. Wittgenstein describes this tendency to search the life of meaning in the mental activity as a ⁷⁴ "disease". This disease is based on a generally correct premises from which a wrong conclusion is made to follow. As words are lifeless in themselves, there must be something in addition to give them meaning, to breathe life into them. But it is wrong to assume that it is a mental activity or

process that gives meaning to a word. It is rather the use(s) of a word in language which makes it meaningful.⁷⁵ In other words, it is the stream of life -- not a mental activity or process -- that makes an expression significant. No doubt every sign by itself seems dead. But what gives it life, is its use not the mental activity of the speaker. In use it is alive.⁷⁶ What Wittgenstein is trying to insist upon is this. Words are certainly dead in themselves, but they are not accompanied by mental acts, processes or experiences. Meaning and understanding are not determined by what goes on in the speakers' and hearers' minds. They are rather matters of how they are used. What gives life and significance to words is their use, i.e. the way they are used in various language-games.

Another, and stronger, reason for the belief that meaning is a mental activity is embedded in the circumstances where we seem to say something and mean something else. These circumstances suggest as if thinking or meaning was an inner process, which people try to convey by means of language. All psychological terms seem to suggest the existence of an inner process running parallel to the physical process, namely, talking. Wittgenstein exposes the source of this illusion in the following passage :

75. Malcolm, R., Ludwig Wittgenstein : A Memoir, p.93.

76. PI, Sec. 432.

Consider the following examples : "Think before you speak!", "He speaks without thinking", "What I said didn't quite express my thought", "He says one thing and thinks just the opposite", "I didn't mean a word of what I said", "The French language uses its words in that order in which we think them.

EB, p. 148.

We must notice here the following points which are interrelated. First, these are only extraordinary circumstances in which meaning may appear to be different from saying. In normal situations this possibility does not arise. Secondly, this distinction between saying and meaning (or thinking) arises only where a speaker is said to mean something. It is absurd to claim that an expression says something, and means something else. Wittgenstein would say, that these are only special uses of the mental words. And if we examine the logic of these expressions carefully, we can see clearly that they do not designate inner processes which may be said to accompany them. Take for example, the statement, "He speaks without thinking". It does not mean, as it is misconstrued to mean, that when he speaks, no mental process occurs in his mind. It means that he speaks carelessly or foolishly, without ever considering whether he should say what he is saying.

Wittgenstein thus maintains that the mental words such as 'thinking' and 'meaning' do not designate any inner process. If there were inner processes running along concurrently with the physical processes of speaking, we should

be able to recognise and identify these alleged processes by introspection. But we fail to trace out anything like that. Certainly it is possible to say something and to mean something else, but usually it is gestures, tone of voice, facial expressions, and a variety of actions and experiences of different kinds before and after, which distinguish meaning what we say from not meaning it.⁷⁷

It may be said : although the meaning of an expression is not determined by any mental activity, yet something must occur if we mean something when we say it. Now it is perfectly true that we can say something absentmindedly or mockingly. But it in no way proves that some inner process is absent in these cases which does occur when we say things and mean them. It is wrong to assume that "He said it and meant what he said" is just like "He said it and smiled."⁷⁸ Nothing occurs in the mind when we say something and mean or do not mean it. Let us examine this point by taking an example of reading.⁷⁹ Suppose a specific mental process, the reading process, *MRP*, is present in the mind when we are reading. The *MRP* would then be our object of analysis of reading, as its presence makes our overt behaviour a manifestation of reading. Wittgenstein tries to show first, that there is no unique mental process present in every case of

77. *IB*, pp. 35, 143, 144-45.

78. Pitcher, G., *The Philosophy of Wittgenstein*, p. 293.

79. Feyerabend, P., "Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations", *PR*, 1955, p. 494.

reading; secondly, that MW does not enable us to explain how mental words (reading in the present case) are meaningful. An empirical investigation into the use of the word 'reading' shows there is not a mental content which is always present when a person is reading, and therefore, the criterion for a person's reading cannot consist in pointing out a particular mental content. The same is true of all other psychological words. Their job is not to name or describe certain inner processes. Wittgenstein analyses brilliantly the idea of a special atmosphere or feeling accompanying each particular word. ⁸⁰ Some philosophers talk of, for instance, an 'if-feeling'. Wittgenstein's answer amounts to this : whatever feeling-accompaniment the reading or uttering of a certain word may have, it is only as so accompanying the word that we are tempted to invest it with this special significance. Any such feeling in isolation from that context would not be recognised at all. But a feeling or atmosphere which loses its identity, when separated from a certain object, says Wittgenstein, is not a special feeling or atmosphere associated with that object at all.

Wittgenstein, however, admits that in some cases an inner content is certainly present. He does not deny that a sense can be given to the notion of experiencing the meaning of a word. Moreover upon introspection we may find an inner

content corresponding to our use of certain words. But an inner content does not form the essence of the meaning of the mental terms. Rather it is simply an idle ritual. As we shall see now, Wittgenstein's main purpose is not so much to deny the occurrence of mental processes, as to refute the doctrine that what gives an expression its meaning and its life, is the user's special experience, or act, of meaning something by it. He tries to show that even if a mental content is present when we are reading or uttering a word, we could not take this content to be the essence of the meaning of that word.

Wittgenstein thus admits that sometimes a mental content does occur. But none of such experiences ever constitutes a person's act of meaning. It is the nature and context of the circumstance in which he speaks, that is important. Once we realise the importance of the situation and its surroundings, we can see clearly that the inner experiences that seem to accompany our use of words are of little relevance in determining their meanings. If an inner process or experience be the essential part of an act of meaning, then it must be a sufficient condition to decide whether a word is used correctly or not. If one is reading, only if one is experiencing the MAP, nothing else is of importance or even required. But it means that no distinction can be drawn between reading and believing that ³¹ one is reading. As Paul Feyerabend says, "our assumption

that reading is a mental act leads, therefore, to the substitution of miracles for an everyday affair.⁸² Words and sentences derive their meanings from the language-games in which they have their roles. No mere mental effort of a person can give a word its meaning. A careful study of such phrases as 'A intends to', 'A means that' shows that what is required in these cases is a description of the way we use these expressions in the language-games which are played with them, and their connection with our actions.

It would not be an unnecessary digression to consider the role of images in this connection. It may be argued that when we use a word, it arouses an image in the mind, which determines its meaning. It is not possible here to reproduce Wittgenstein's analysis in detail. However, he maintains that no bridge from words to the world can be built on the basis of mental images. There is no effective reply to the 'third man' argument here. It is, then, not the occurrence of an image, but its use, that gives it any significance. What a particular image says, depends on how it is used -- not on its occurrence. Its use in its turn, depends on how the expression for it is used in various language-games.⁸³ An image is, thus, not a necessary element in the bearing of a word. For example, the word 'elliptical', derives

82. Poystrabond, P., 'Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations', PR, 1954, p. 459.
 83. PI, Secs. 139-41.

its meaning from the language-games in which it is used, not from the occurrence of an image in the user's mind. That is why Wittgenstein says :

If God had looked into our minds he would not have been able to see there when we were speaking of.

PI, p. 217.

To sum up, Wittgenstein has tried to show with extraordinary brilliance that generally there is no mental content designated by mental words, and that even in the situations where a mental content seems to be present, the meaning of a word is not determined by its occurrence. What gives meaning and life to words and sentences is their use in language-and-life. We use the word 'meaning' in a wide variety of situations, and it is wrong to maintain that in all these situations it is the occurrence of an occult process or a mysterious act in the mind which justifies the use of this term (and others). What goes on in the user's mind is only an idle ritual in the sense that it is a mere accompaniment and does in no way determine the use of language.

What is happening now has significance -- in these surroundings. The surroundings give it its importance.

PI, Sec. 563.

The use of language presupposes the existence of both the speaker and the hearer. The hearer must not only listen to what a speaker says, he must be attentive and try to grasp

it carefully. It suggests, wrongly, that when a speaker understands an expression, when he understands the sense of language, something occurs in his mind which justifies us to say that he has now understood it. That is to say, he knows now how to go on. Let us discuss Wittgenstein's refutation of this doctrine.

Wittgenstein's analysis reveals that the essential criteria whether someone has understood an expression lie in the application which he makes of it -- not in the mental occurrence. However, Wittgenstein does admit, that it is a natural way to regard understanding as a mental activity. It may correctly be said that we 'grasp the meaning in a flash'. A picture or a formula may come before our mind. It may be correct to say that someone solved a problem because he understood the formula. But these admissions do not establish the thesis that the essence of understanding an expression consists in the mental content. Neither the picture, nor the formula nor any other experience decides that someone has understood an expression. They can be variously applied, and only their use can show us that they have been understood correctly. So the inner experience, if it occurs at all, is not the correct test. That resides in the application.

A very good way of describing Wittgenstein's analysis is to examine the notion of knowing how to go on. As he

⁸⁵
 says, the grammar of the word 'knows' is evidently closely related to that of 'can', 'is able to'. But also closely related to that of 'understands'. Let us see the grammar of "How I can go on". Suppose, A writes the series 1,5,11, 19,29, at this point B says he knows how to go on. How various things may have happened to B. It is wrong to think that B's knowing how to go on must be something that went on in his mind. B might have engaged in no mental activities, and yet he may be justified in his claim. On the other hand, in some situation, the right formula may have occurred to B, yet he may not know how to go on. ⁸⁶ Wittgenstein shows that "knows how to go on" means different things in different situations, as the statement "He can walk now" ⁸⁷ means different things in different situations. In no situation "He knows how to go on" or "I know how to go on" can consist in the sudden occurrence of a mental process. The fundamental criterion lies in actual going on. For example, if B can successfully continue the series, then his claim is perfectly justified. It means, then, the expression "How I can go on" is not a description of a mental state, it is a claim which is correct if B does or would in the appropriate circumstances proceed in the right way. ⁸⁸ It is an exclamation, a glad start. So Wittgenstein says :

85. PI, Sec., 150.

86. PI, Sec., 152.

87. BB, pp. 114-15 and PI, Sec. 153.

88. PI, Sec., 323.

In the sense in which there are processes (including mental processes) which are characteristic of understanding, understanding is not a mental process.

PI, Sec. 154.

He has, I think successfully, shown that a person's understanding something is not a process that occurs in his mind. It consists rather, in the use that he makes of it. And only his actual performance shows that he has understood it correctly.

We must conclude with a word of caution. Someone may say that although 'understanding' and 'meaning' are not names of mental occurrences in the strict sense, yet there is a sense of 'name' in which they may be said to name mental processes. But Wittgenstein would reply that to say this is to say nothing significant. His remark about signifying is important in this connection :

When we say : "Every word in language signifies something" we have so far said nothing whatever; unless we have explained exactly what distinction we wish to make.

PI, Sec. 13.

To say that meaning, thinking and understanding are names of mental contents may be true, if it purports to distinguish the grammar of these words from that of non-mental words.

CHAPTER - VII

**A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS
(continued)**

We have seen in the previous chapter that according to Wittgenstein meaning and understanding are not mental activities. Their function is neither to name nor to describe mental occurrences. These terms derive their meaning from the various language-games in which they are used. Wittgenstein does not stop here. He proceeds to examine those words of language which are supposed to refer to essentially private experiences -- words like 'pain', 'itch', 'ache', 'anger', 'mood', and others. It is believed that only I know my pain, others can only guess. Similarly I can never know for certainty, that somebody is in pain. These and other similar expressions strongly suggest that sensation-and-feeling-words name and describe insharably private experiences.

Before we come to Wittgenstein's analysis of sensation-expressions in the *Philosophical Investigations*, it would be profitable to see briefly his earlier views. Moore¹ reports that in the early 1930's Wittgenstein accepted the

1. Moore, G.E., "Wittgenstein's Lectures in 1930-33", reprinted in *Philosophical Papers*, p. 308.

popular view, that sensation-words describe 'primary experience'. He also maintained that both first-person and ² third-person sensation-words describe the same sensation. For example, 'toothache' means the same thing in both the propositions "I have toothache", and "He has toothache". But, Wittgenstein realised soon that these propositions have ³ different meanings. He noticed that they are different in their logical characteristics. However, he still adhered to the view that words like 'pain' and 'ache' describe private contents of our conscious life.

Let us turn now to the account of sensation-words as given in the Investigations. It is better to start with the negative aspect of Wittgenstein's views. He tries to refute the popular view by bringing out its absurdities. The view (say, view P) which Wittgenstein criticises throughout his later works may be briefly put as follows :

- (i) Sensations are private; no one can have my pains.
- (ii) Sensation-words are commonly used to name and/or describe private contents of consciousness.
- (iii) The meaning of a sensation-word, like other words, is the thing it refers to, namely, a sensation.
- (iv) Only I can know that I have a sensation; it is the bearer and bearer alone who can claim to have full understanding of the sensation-expressions which he uses to describe his sensations.

2. Ibid, pp. 307-8.

3. Ibid, p. 307.

Each of the steps in this view (P) looks plausible, and the argument itself has a great deal of force. Yet the conclusion that only the bearer knows that he has a particular sensation, is false, because other people do understand me, when I talk of my sensations, feelings etc. That is to say, other people do know that I am in pain. Wittgenstein thus proceeds to discuss the absurd consequences which must follow, if the view P is accepted as true.

It must be said at the outset, that Wittgenstein is attacking only a philosophical theory about sensation-expressions (viz., P or the Cartesian doctrine that separates mental occurrences from publicly observable characteristics). As I shall show later on, his discussion is only grammatical, and in no sense empirical. He has neither denied the existence of sensations, feelings etc., nor has he formulated any theory about language. His claim is very modest, namely, to describe the logical grammar of sensation-expressions. A careful study of the various language-games in which sensation-expressions are used will show, according to Wittgenstein, that the Cartesian dualism concerning mental concepts is untenable, as it makes the use of sensation-words impossible.

We may examine certain absurd consequences which follow from the view P. The view P holds that while I am absolutely certain that I am in pain, I can never know for certain,

whether another person is in pain or not. This is so, because I cannot feel another person's pain. I can only guess or believe that someone else is in pain, I can never know it. But this is absurd, says Wittgenstein. If we are using the word 'know' in its standard sense, then other people usually know when I am in pain, as I know when they are. Talking about the privacy of sensations, Wittgenstein says :

In one way this is wrong, and in another nonsense. If we are using the word "to know" as it is normally used (and how else are we to use it?), then other people very often know when I am in pain.

PI, Sec. 246.

About the certainty of the third-person sensation-expressions he says :

I can be as certain of someone else's sensations as of any fact.

PI, p. 226.

Am I less certain that this man is in pain than that twice two is four?

PI, p. 224.

Wittgenstein says that there are real situations in which it makes no sense to doubt whether someone is really in pain.

Just try -- in a real case -- to doubt someone else's fear or pain.

PI, Sec. 303.

Wittgenstein's contention is that there are situations in which I am as certain that another person is in pain, as of my own pain. It may, however, be said that the other person

might be only pretending or acting. There are situations, Wittgenstein replies, in which it is quite possible that a person is pretending or acting, but there are cases in which I know for certainty that he is not pretending. Suppose a man has met with an accident, he is bleeding and crying. Is it possible to maintain that he might be pretending? An advocate of the view 'P' will hold that even in this case a conceivable doubt does exist -- despite the obvious pain-behaviour he may not be feeling the pain-sensation. If you are certain, is it not that you are shutting your eyes in face of doubt? But if I find the man bleeding and crying, and I rush to his help, then I cannot be in doubt. It is only a philosophical theory that makes room for doubt, for which there is no other ground. It is the situation alone, not some occult process, that provides us with the criterion for determining whether a person is really in pain or is only pretending. It is simply irrational to doubt, if there is no positive ground for it. Doubting is a form of life, apart from which it has no significance. Doubting cannot just consist in saying 'I doubt'. There must be something in the situation itself which justifies our doubting. Moreover, whenever we are in doubt, it must affect our attitude and practice. If our attitude and practice are not in conformity with a doubt, then the doubt is pointless. To imagine a doubt is not to be in doubt. Doubting has an end.

4. PI, Sec. 64.

5. PI, p. 180.

The expression of doubt has no place in the language-game.⁶

Wittgenstein makes an interesting observation which cuts at the root of the linguistic picture that leads us to scepticism about the third-person sensation-expressions. It is wrong to say, he points out, that I know that I am in pain. I know that the other person is in pain. The point is not empirical but grammatical. It is pointless to use the term 'know', for my pain. The verb 'to know' and the adverb 'for certain' are used only in the situations in which it is possible to be mistaken. But there is no possibility of being mistaken when I am in pain. If it is correct to say, 'I know that I am in pain', then the following questions put to me must make good sense :

How do you know you are in pain?

Are you sure?

And the following remarks ought to be equally intelligible :

I think I am in pain, but I may be mistaken.

I do not know whether I am in pain or not.

I believe I am in pain.

I seem to be in pain.

I doubt whether I am in pain.

Let me find out if I am in pain.

But all these questions and remarks are out of circulation

in our language. These language-games are missing; they are never played. The absurdity of these remarks demonstrates clearly that the terms 'know' and 'certain' or their equivalents cannot be used for the first-person sensation-expressions. Consequently, the scepticism attached with the third-person sensation-expressions loses its significance.
 7
 What Wittgenstein says about thinking can be said about pain also : I do not know that I am in pain, but I know that the other person is in pain.

Wittgenstein launches a powerful attack on the view that sensation-words stand for private sensations, by examining the possibility of a private language. The view under consideration, we have already seen, maintains that sensation-words—'pain' 'itching' 'burning' etc. — get their meaning by designating inner or private sensations. In other words, the meaning of 'pain' and other sensation-words is necessarily tied up with our private sensations. Consequently, the meaning of 'pain' (and other sensation-words) is determined independently of pain-behaviour and other publicly observable characteristics of the situation in which 'pain' is used. An obvious conclusion of this view is that each one of us must learn sensation-words only by associating them with corresponding sensations. Such a language, in which

7. I can know what someone else is thinking, not what I am thinking. It is correct to say "I know what you are thinking", and wrong to say "I know what I am thinking." — PI, p. 223.

'pain', 'itch' etc. are learned privately by associating them with inner contents of consciousness, must be a private language. But a private language is an impossibility.

Wittgenstein makes two observations in this connection : First, a man could not make himself understood when he used these words and secondly, we cannot say that these words are names of sensations. Let us see these points in detail.

The first observation is concerned with the unintelligibility of the words which designate private sensations. These words would be unintelligible, according to Wittgenstein, because no one except the user knows with what he has associated them. If by 'pain' I mean nothing but a sensation, which I experience only in the privacy of my consciousness, then no one can understand me. Similarly, if 'pain' names a sensation which only the experiencer can know, then I can never understand what it would mean to say that another person is in pain. Wittgenstein examines the suggestion that I can understand that he is in pain, on the supposition that he has just the same experience as I have so often had. But this suggestion gets us no further. It is like saying : "you surely know what 'It is 5 O'clock here' means; so you also know what 'It's 5 O'clock on the sun' means. It means simply that it is just the same time there as it is here when it is 5 O'clock". The explanation by

means of identity, says Wittgenstein, does not work here. I know what it means to say 'the same time', but what I do not know is in what cases one is to speak of its being the same time here and there. How can I know that the other person has the same pain? Can I say that the stone has the same experience as I have, if one says : "it is in pain"? One can say : pain is pain -- whether he has it, or I have it. But this is explaining away the problem.⁹ Similarly, Wittgenstein rejects the suggestion that I can imagine someone else's pain on the model of my own pain as getting us¹⁰ nowhere.

In the arguments we have been discussing above, Wittgenstein accepted the view that sensation-words name private sensations, and tried to show that it would lead to the absurd thesis according to which no one save the experimenter can understand that he is in pain (or is having other sensations). But he proceeds to show that a private understanding of sensation-words is impossible. In other words, a private language is inconceivable. It cannot be maintained that sensation-words are intelligible to the man who is having a sensation, even though they could not be understood by other people.

Let us see then, what Wittgenstein means by a private language, and how it is impossible. It is essential not to

9. PI, Secs. 251-52.
10. PI, Sec. 303.

confuse the possibility of a private language with either (a) the question whether I can, for my private use, keep a diary in ordinary English to record my pains, moods, feelings etc.; or (b) the question whether there could be in fact a language used by only one person but capable of being understood by any explorer. No one will dispute that the answer to the first question is affirmative, and no one will mistake it for Wittgenstein's problem. But a controversy¹¹ between Ayer and Rhees indicates that the question (b) is more difficult to answer, and may be confused with the question Wittgenstein has raised. Both Ayer and Rhees show a correct understanding of the problem. Ayer states the problem he is criticising as "that for a person to be able to attach meaning to a sign it is necessary that other people should be capable of understanding it too."¹² In the words of Rhees the main question "is a question of whether I can have a private understanding; whether I can understand something which could not be said in a language which anyone else could understand."¹³ Thus both are concerned mainly with the question (b). However, Ayer interprets the problem wrongly, and tries to refute a thesis which is different from the question he poses. His arguments are intended to prove, (1) that there can be a language which is, and always has been, as a matter of fact, unintelligible to anyone but

11. *PAF*, Supplementary Vol. 26, 1954, pp. 63-94.

12. *Ibid*, pp. 66-70.

13. *Ibid*, p. 83.

its speaker; and (2) that sensation-reports are not of necessity unintelligible to anyone but their maker. Rhees tries to reject Ayer's contention on the ground that a language must consist of rules, and there could be nothing to decide whether the speaker using a private language was following rules. It is disputable whether Rhees has given a satisfactory reply to Ayer, but as Garver has pointed out "this controversy should be distinguished from the question they formulated --so the question raised by Wittgenstein about private language."¹⁴ By a "private" language is "meant one that not merely is not but cannot be understood by anyone other than the speaker."¹⁵ The reason for this is, as we have already seen, that the words of this language are supposed to "refer to what can only be known to the person speaking."¹⁶ It is supposed that I learn this language by associating words with sensations.¹⁷ I fix my attention on a sensation, and establish a connection between a word and the sensation.¹⁸ The philosophical considerations which strengthen the possibility of a 'private' language are : that I know from my own case what the word 'pain' means;¹⁹ that I can only believe that someone else is in pain;²⁰ that another person cannot have my pains;²¹ that when I say 'I am in pain' I am at any rate justified before

14. Garver, H., "Wittgenstein On Private Language", PPA, Vol. XX, p. 390.

15. Malcolm, H., "Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations", PA, 1954, Vol. 63, pp. 530-51.

16. PI, Sec. 243;

17. PI, Sec. 256.

18. PI, Sec. 238;

19. PI, Sec. 293-295.

20. PI, Sec. 303.

21. PI, Sec. 263.

22
myself.

Wittgenstein intends to show that such a private language does not exist, that it is a logical impossibility. If sensation-words are not connected with overt manifestations of sensations-- i.e., if people just inwardly had pains, but did not cry or groan or grimace or plead for help -- then they cannot be used in any language. We learn sensation-words in certain situations which give meaning to them. If a 'sign' is supposed to name a particular sensation independently of all its overt expressions and situations in which it is ascribed to persons, then it cannot perform its job. It ceases to be a word in language.

To guard against a possible misunderstanding, we must not forget that Wittgenstein is examining the Cartesian account of the matter. In order to understand Wittgenstein's investigations, it is important to realize that the thesis under discussion is being proposed by the Cartesian interlocutor, not by Wittgenstein or an ordinary man. It is only as a Cartesian account, that the case becomes philosophically interesting.

Wittgenstein's concern, thus, is to examine the thesis that sensations can be named 'privately'. Before proceeding with his reductio ad absurdum argument, Wittgenstein imagines his interlocutor to put his case in this way :

Let us imagine the following case. I want to keep a diary about the recurrence of a certain sensation. To this end I associate it with the sign "S",²³ and write this sign in a calendar for everyday on which I have the sensation.²⁴

Wittgenstein tells us immediately that a definition of the sign cannot be formulated. But still it is possible to give a kind of ostensive definition. Normally a sign is ostensively defined by pointing to the object or property it is intended to refer to. In all such cases the object or property is publicly observable. I can teach the meaning of 'red' to someone by pointing to something which is red. But I cannot point to the sensation in this sense.²⁵ We cannot give ostensive definitions for sensation-words in the ordinary sense. The only way open to the Cartesian is to suggest that the connection is established by a private ostensive definition. Suppose I experience a certain sensation. I concentrate inwardly on the sensation, and give it the name "S". This is like an ostensive definition, only in this case I point to the sensation mentally, and I give this definition to no one but myself. I may keep a diary and write down the sign "S" whenever I experience the same sensation in future.

Wittgenstein replies that the whole idea of giving myself a private definition is pointless. In itself it is but an idle ritual, like my right hand's giving money to my

23. Note : The "S" comes from the English word 'sensation'; the German word for it is 'Empfindung'.
 24. PI, Sec. 253.
 25. PI, Sec. 253.

26

left hand. Whether pointless or not, let us see if the idea is possible. Wittgenstein presents the following objections which show that it is not. Suppose I suddenly experience a sensation which I have never felt before. I focus my attention on it, and decide to name it "S". The grammar of a name implies that I can use it correctly in future. In other words, to have named a sensation means that whenever the same sensation occurs to me, I shall be able to identify and name it. That is to say, if I have named a sensation "S", I shall be able to use "S" again, whenever I experience the same sensation. I have established a connection between "S" and a particular sensation, e.g., pain. But I have not established this connection if in future I apply the sign "S" to some other sensation or to experiences other than sensations, e.g., emotions. In short, my private ostensive definition is correct if, and only if, it enables me to get the connection right everytime. It must be possible for me to know whether the entries in my diary are correct or not. How is it to be decided whether I have used the sign "S" correctly or not?

I can know that I have used "S" correctly only if I can identify that I am experiencing the same sensation. In order to write "S" again in my diary, I must be able to recognise that it is the same sensation which I experienced

before and named "S". But to speak of correctness is to imply the existence of a criterion of correctness. If there is no such criterion, it would be simply idle to talk of correctness. Wittgenstein is not assuming here anything uncritically, as might appear at first sight. It follows from the nature of language itself that there must be some way to distinguish correctness from incorrectness, if the former is to be used significantly, or to be used at all. It would certainly be a dogma to accept a particular criterion as the criterion. But Wittgenstein never makes this claim. What he is saying is simply this that there must be some criterion. So what is the criterion of the sensation I have now and call "S" being the same as the one I experienced the other day and also named "S"? There is no external check. All I can say is that it seems to me to be so. But this is no criterion, because a criterion is required here to decide that what seems to be the case is really the case. No doubt we often give such replies as "it seems to me to be so", "I think so", and "I believe so". But in all these cases there is some way of finding out whether what seems to be the case is really the case. In the present case, however, there is no such criterion which can help us if a doubt arises. I have only an impression that I have the same sensation. Consequently we cannot talk about correctness or rightness.

Whatever is going to seem right to me is right. And that only means that here we can't talk about 'right'!

PI, Sec. 258.

To think that something is so, is not to identify it. My impression that I follow a rule does not prove that I follow the rule. There must be something independently of my impression that I can use to prove that I am following a rule. In this way the lack of any criterion of identity for the sensation makes a "private" naming impossible. And the impossibility is of a logical kind. It is not that it is difficult to find out a criterion; there is actually no criterion. Therefore there is no possible way, on the Cartesian thesis, to name sensations. A "private" diary would be a mere sham record -- its signs being no sign at all. "5", for instance, is an idle mark; it has no use, no function,
27
no connection with anything.

One may be inclined to say that memory must be accepted as a criterion. One can simply remember a sensation and by remembering it will know that one is making a correct use of its name. I can remember that the sensation I have now is the same which I had the other day. After all, we do have some confidence in memory. Memory plays a vital role in our daily affairs. I remember that the train leaves at 10 a.m., and I rely on my memory. Similar is the case with sensations, feelings etc. But Wittgenstein rejects this possibility. In a "private" language, the assertion that my memory tells me so and so, will be empty. "My memory" does not mean even my memory impression. A memory impression is something which is

either accurate or inaccurate. But in a "private" language there is no external check. I can, it might be said, appeal from one memory to another. But it is like buying several copies of the morning paper to assure oneself that what it said was true.²⁸

Unfortunately the significance of Wittgenstein's criticism of memory as a criterion of sensations has been missed. Strawson writes in his critical notice of the *Philosophical Investigations* :

"Wittgenstein gives himself considerable trouble over the question of how a man would introduce a name for a sensation into this private language. But we need imagine no special ceremony. He might simply be struck by the recurrence of a certain sensation and get into the habit of making a certain mark in a different place everytime it occurred. The making of the marks would help to impress the occurrence on his memory."²⁹

Similarly Carl Wellman says :

"If memory has some credibility, one can check on his use of a word which stands for a sensation One memory can support another provided that each has some initial probability. On the other hand, if memory has no credibility, one can have no criterion

28. *PI*, Sec. 265.

29. Strawson, P.F., "Critical Notice : *Philosophical Investigations*", *Mind*, Vol. 63, 1954, p. 85.

for his use of any word. Checking one's use against an external standard takes time and, therefore, requires the use of memory. The difficulty seems to arise from the rejection of memory rather than from the privacy of experience.³⁰

While Strawson simply asserts that memory enables a man to use words to refer to his sensations, Sellman bases his objection on the ground that if memory has no credibility, one can have no criterion for his use of any word. But Wittgenstein would never deny that memory plays an important role in our daily affairs, and, that it does act as a criterion. What they have failed to realize, however, is that it is the infallibility of memory that is rejected by Wittgenstein, not memory itself. Memory is something which may be true or false -- it is not a court from which there is no appeal. There must, therefore, be something independent of memory to test its correctness. This point is ignored because usually we rely on our memory and act upon it. I remember, for example, that the train leaves at 10 a.m., and I do not look up the time-table. But in case there is a doubt, I can look up the time-table. The important point, then, is that in all such cases where we rely on memory, a criterion exists as to whether our memory is correct or incorrect. But in a "private" language, no such criterion

30. Sellman, C., "Wittgenstein and the egocentric predicament", *Mind*, Vol. 68, 1959, p. 225.

exists. What would show here that my memory is false or true? In the case of remembering a sensation no such criterion exists. And memory is not the highest court of appeal:

Imagine that you were supposed to paint a particular colour "C", which was the colour that appeared when the chemical substances x and y combined. -- Suppose that the colour struck you as brighter on one day than on another; would you not sometimes say: "I must be wrong, the colour is certainly the same as yesterday"? This shows that we do not always resort to what memory tells us as the verdict of the highest court of appeal.

PI, Sec. 56.

A Cartesian interlocutor may still insist that even if a man fails to identify his sensations, he does feel something, and this is the important thing. Wittgenstein puts this point thus: "Yes, but there is something there all the same accompanying my cry of pain. And it is on account of that that I utter it. And this something is what is important and frightful." ³¹ Wittgenstein rejects even this line of defence. He is not denying the presence of pain in the consciousness of the man who is in pain. What he is denying is the thesis that it is this "private" sensation -- this something -- that gives meaning to sensation-words. What he is maintaining is that "private" sensations do not enter into sensation-language-games. Commenting on the alleged "something", Wittgenstein says:

Suppose everyone had a box with something in it: we call it a "beetle". No one can look into anyone else's

box, and everyone says he knows what a beetle is only by looking at his beetle. -- Here it would be quite possible for everyone to have something different in his box. One might even imagine such a thing constantly changing. -- But suppose the word "beetle" had a use in these people's language? If so it would not be used as the name of a thing. The thing in the box has no place in the language-game at all; not even as a something: for the box might even be empty. -- So, one can 'divide through' by the thing in the box; it cancels out, whatever it is.

PI, Sec. 293.

Analogically, if 'pain' refers to "something" privately, then the "something" cancels out. 'Pain' according to Wittgenstein, derives its meaning from the pain language-games; and what is important in pain language-games is pain-behaviour, pain-comforting behaviour and other characteristics of the circumstances in which the word 'pain' is used -- not a "private" sensation. It should not, however, lead us to suppose that sensations are nothing. Wittgenstein is aware of the charge of behaviourism, and says that ³² if he has denied anything, it is a grammatical fiction. The following remark sums up his position excellently:

"And yet you again and again reach the conclusion that the sensation itself is a nothing" -- Not at all. It is not a something, but not a nothing either! The conclusion was only that a nothing would serve just as well as a something about which nothing could be said. We have only rejected the grammar which tries to force itself on us here.

PI, Sec. 304.

Let us turn, now, to Wittgenstein's positive account

32. PI, Secs. 305, 306, 307 and 308.

of sensation-expressions. It is a fact that we can, and do, talk about our sensations; so the following questions must be answered: Does it make no sense to say that sensations are private?, what is the function of sensation-expressions? how can I attribute sensations to others? etc.

To begin with the first question, as we have seen above, Wittgenstein maintains that our use of sensation-words is tied up with the expression of sensations. It may give the impression that Wittgenstein is advancing a theory about sensations in opposition to the common-sense view that they are private. But this impression is based on the misunderstanding of Wittgenstein's philosophy. He has explicitly³³ rejected the impression that he has put forward a thesis.³⁴ He destroys only "houses of cards" and "grammatical fictions."³⁵ One of the reasons why people are led to the concept of a "private" language is this: "sensations are private; no one else can have my sensations (for instance, pains)." Wittgenstein examines the nature of this statement thoroughly and shows that it expresses only a grammatical point. The proposition "sensations are private" is comparable³⁶ to "One plays patience by oneself." It is also like the proposition "Every rod has a length."³⁷ What Wittgenstein

33. PI, Sec. 128.

34. PI, Sec. 110.

35. PI, Sec. 307.

36. PI, Sec. 248.

37. PI, Sec. 251.

means is that they are grammatical statements, inspite of their misleading similarity with empirical propositions, and might be used to teach a learner how to use the words "sensations", "pain" or "red", but could not be used for giving informations. The propositions "Sensations are private" and "No one else can have my pains" are not like the propositions "My headaches are severe" and "No one else can look at my diary."³⁸ The following points about the logic of grammatical propositions will enable us to understand Wittgenstein's ideas :

- (1) There is no sharp boundary between grammatical and empirical propositions.
- (2) Some propositions, therefore, may be used as either grammatical or empirical. For example, the proposition, "Pure water freezes at 0° centigrade" may either be used to teach someone what we mean by "0° centigrade" or to teach him a physical fact.

In the light of these remarks it is easier to understand that the natural employment of a grammatical proposition is to teach someone about the use of a word, and not to support a metaphysical thesis. The proposition "No one can have my pains", illustrates only the grammar of the word 'pain'. It cannot be used to support the metaphysical

38. Note : I have taken these examples from Newton Garver's article 'Wittgenstein on Private Language', PPA, 1969, p. 391.

thesis that no one can know anyone else's pains (or other sensations). To say that a proposition is grammatical, is to say that it expresses some feature of the language. The proposition "sensations are private" tells us something about the use of 'sensations'. "No one else can have my pains" expresses the grammar of the word 'pain'. That is to say, the language-games in which the word 'pain' is used does not permit the use of the proposition "Two persons can have the same sensations". Consequently, the "privacy" of sensations is only a grammatical point, and cannot be used to support any metaphysical theory about them.

Taking up the next question viz., if sensation-words do not name sensations privately, what uses do they have? How can they mean sensations at all? To appreciate Wittgenstein's replies to these questions it would be better to start with his account of the first-person present tense uses of 'pain' (and other sensation-words) which are different from other uses. If I am in pain, it makes no sense to ask me "How do you know you are in pain?", but it makes a perfectly good sense to ask "How do you know that he is in pain?". Similarly, I cannot say, "I think I am in pain, but I may be wrong", but it is quite correct to say, "I think he is in pain, but I may be mistaken". Thus the questions and remarks which are odd in connection with the first-person present-tense uses of 'pain', are quite significant for the third-person sensation-utterances.

What do the first-person present tense utterances of pain mean? What are the uses of sentences like "I am in pain" and "I have a pain"? In short, how do I learn to use sensation-words? Wittgenstein says :

How do words refer to sensations? -- There doesn't seem to be any problem here; don't we talk about sensations every day, and give them names? But how is the connection between the name and the thing named set up? This question is the same as : how does a human being learn the meaning of the names of sensations? -- of the word "pain" for example. Here is one possibility: words are connected with the primitive, the natural, expressions of the sensation and used in their place. A child has hurt himself and he cries; and then adults talk to him and teach him exclamations and, later, sentences. They teach the child new pain -- behaviour.

PI, Sec. 244.

Wittgenstein is saying that the meaning of 'pain' is established not by an ostensive definition, but by actual situations in which pain is ascribed to persons, and natural expressions of pain. Sensation-words are connected with the natural expressions of sensations. Let us see how it is done. We teach children how to use sensation-words. For example when a child falls down or receives an injury, and starts crying or screaming, we comfort him with such words as "Oh! you have a pain", and try to relieve the pain. Such things may occur again and the child learns that 'pain' is used in those situations. He may first learn the exclamation 'pain!' and later on sentences as "I am in pain" or "I have a pain". Thus "I am in pain" is not connected with my private sensations, but with my pain-behaviour which is

publicly observable. If 'pain' means a private sensation, then the child can never learn its meaning. What is thus epistemologically important is pain-behaviour, not a particular private sensation. Does it mean that 'pain' describes pain-behaviour, namely, crying, groaning etc.? Certainly not. When I want to cure my pain, it is not my behaviour that I want to end. Then, is the behaviour to be regarded as a symptom of the pain on the basis of which I say that I am in pain? Clearly not. I do not verify that I am in pain by observing my behaviour. Sentences like "I am in pain" and "I have a pain" are not assertions about a sensation. To suppose that they are, leads to absurdities. Nor are they descriptions of pain-behaviour. They are not assertions at all. They are very different language-games. According to Wittgenstein, the utterances "I have a pain" and "I am in pain" are not used as assertions either about a pain-sensation or about pain-behaviour; saying these words is, rather, acquired pain-behaviour. They are, so to say, like groaning and grimacing. The utterance "I am in pain" is used like the words "Ouch" and "Ow". Like "Ouch", "I am in pain" is a learned expression of pain. My words for sensations are used in place of the behaviour that is the natural expression of the sensations.

So you are saying that the word 'pain' really means crying?" -- On the contrary : the verbal expression of pain replaces crying and does not describe it.

PI, Sec. 244.

This explains the oddity of such remarks as "How do

you know you are in pain?", "I think I am in pain" etc. These remarks are odd, for it makes no sense to speak of being mistaken about one's own groaning, crying etc. -- crying and groaning are not statements. Wittgenstein takes a step further and maintains that 'I' in the statement "I am in pain" does not name a person.³⁰ Thus neither 'I' nor 'pain' is a name of anything. The sentence expresses a new sophisticated pain-behaviour.

We come now to third-person sensation-expressions. Our discussion may give the impression that all sorts of sensation-words are expressions of a sensation; this is wrong. Wittgenstein assimilates only first-person present-tense sensation-words to expressions of sensations. The logic of other sensation-words is different. They are not a part of acquired behaviour. To say "He is in pain" is not to exhibit pain-behaviour. It is to say something about someone else, in relation to which all the questions and remarks, which are odd in relation to first-person present-tense sensation-sentences, make perfectly good sense. There is nothing absurd with these remarks; "I know he is in pain", "I believe he is in pain", "I guess he is in pain", "He might be in pain", "judging from the way he is behaving. I would say that he is in pain", "How do you know he is in pain?", "I think he is in pain, but I may be mistaken" and so on. That is to say, third-person sensation-sentences say something which can be true or false, about which the

speaker may be mistaken, about which one can doubt and conjecture, and which is in need of some sort of verification. Does it mean that third-person sensation-sentences describe a private mental object present in the consciousness of the other fellow? Certainly not. Nor do they describe his behaviour.

The first important point Wittgenstein makes in this connection is this. It is not false, but unintelligible to ascribe sensations to inanimate things, to anything that is devoid of natural sensation expressions. "Only of a living human being and what resembles (behaves like) a living human being can one say : it has sensations."⁴⁰ It is by analogy with the human behaviour that consciousness and sensations are ascribed to nonhuman beings. It means behaviour is essential for the ascription of sensations to others. If what is important is the occurrence of private sensations, then it must make sense to attribute sensations to even inanimate things. It must make sense to imagine that pets, pans, and stones might be in great pain, the only difference is that they cannot express their pains. How can I know that they are in pain? Can one say of the stone that it has a soul and that is what has pain?⁴¹ One might as well ascribe it to a number!⁴² And our attitude to what is alive and to what is dead, is not the same. All our reactions are

40. PI, Secs. 251-253.

41. PI, Sec. 253.

42. PI, Sec. 254.

different.⁴³ Where there is no possibility of pain behaviour, there is no possibility of pain either. This is why, it makes no sense to ascribe pain to pans, pots and stones. "And now look at a wriggling fly and at once these difficulties vanish and pain seems able to get a foothold here,⁴⁴ where everything was, so to speak, too smooth for it." But one feels inclined to object : at least in fairy tales the pot too can see and hear (and be in pain). "Certainly;⁴⁵ but it can also talk."

It is clear now that according to Wittgenstein my criterion of another's being in pain is his behaviour. It does not, however, mean that Wittgenstein is equating a person's being in pain with his actually exhibiting pain behaviour. First, a person can be in pain and suppress all pain behaviour. "But notice that he does have to suppress it: in these cases, there must be at least a tendency, a proneness, to exhibit pain behaviour, even if one manages⁴⁶ to suppress the tendency." Secondly, a person can exhibit pain-behaviour without actually being in pain. He can be shamming, play-acting, giving a demonstration, or he may be in the hypnotic state. It means pain-behaviour is a criterion of pain only in certain circumstances, in certain surroundings, not in others. Thus, my criterion of the other person being in pain is his behaviour and his words, and the cir-

43. PI, Sec., 284.

44. PI, Sec., 284.

45. PI, Sec., 282.

46. Pitcher, G., The Philosophy of Wittgenstein, p.307.

circumstances. A person's behaviour is the criterion of his being in pain only if he is in a genuine pain-situation. It is not Wittgenstein's aim to deny the fact that when a person is in pain he must feel pain; what he is emphasising is that an "inner process" requires "outward criteria."⁴⁷

There is, however, no list of circumstances that can enable us to know a priori whether the situation is genuine or not. But it should not lead us to despair and scepticism. There are situations of real life in which a question as to whether the person who is exhibiting pain-behaviour is really in pain, simply does not arise.

It is thus the context that determines whether a person is really in pain or is only shamming. In all such cases where the situation is genuine, our attitude towards the person in pain is different from the one who is shamming or play-acting. If I find the person is bleeding and groaning, I try to comfort him. If a Cartesian interlocutor still insists on doubting, his doubt is unintelligible. Of course, it is always possible to imagine a doubt, but to imagine a doubt is not to be in doubt. My attitude towards the other person is an attitude towards a soul.⁴⁸ Similarly, the distinction between thinking that one person is in pain and thinking that another is not in pain, is bound up with a difference in attitude. If I know that a person is in pain, I react to him sympathetically, send for the doctor,

47. PI, Sec. 580.

48. PI, p. 178.

give him medicine, but if I know that he is not in pain, I react differently. Thus Wittgenstein would maintain that what is to be accepted as a justification or criterion is a form of life.

What has to be accepted, the given, is -- so one could say -- forms of life.

PI, p. 236.

There are certain objections made against Wittgenstein's investigation of sensation-words. Strawson in his Critical Notice makes a distinction between "a stronger and a weaker thesis, of which the first is false and the second true."⁴⁹ "The weaker thesis says that certain conditions must be satisfied for the existence of a common language in which sensations are ascribed to those who have them."⁵⁰ "The stronger thesis says that no words name sensations (or 'private experiences'); and in particular the word 'pain' does not."⁵¹ Then he says, "The oscillation between the two theses is to be explained by the fact that the weaker can be made to yield to the stronger by the addition of a certain premise about language, viz., that all there is to be said about the descriptive meaning of a word is said when it is indicated what criteria people can use for employing it or for deciding whether or not it is correctly employed."⁵² His "observation with the expression of pain" leads him "to deny

49. Strawson, P.F., "Critical Notice : Philosophical Investigations", Mind, Vol. 63, 1954.

50. Ibid, p. 84.

51. Ibid, p. 84.

52. Ibid, p. 84.

that sensations can be recognised and bear names.⁵³ Strawson attributes these errors to "the old verificationist horror⁵⁴ of a claim that cannot be checked", and to various confusions and muddles.⁵⁵

⁵⁶ As Malcolm has pointed out this is an erroneous account of Wittgenstein. He never denies that we talk about sensations, describe them and give them names. Rather he says it explicitly : "Don't we talk about sensations every-day, and give them names?" and then asks, "How does a human being learn the names of sensations? -- of the word 'pain' for example?"⁵⁷ It is a fact that we classify sensations and give them separate names as 'pain', 'itch', 'ache' etc. We also distinguish sensations from feelings, moods etc. Certainly it is not Wittgenstein's aim to deny this. If sensations cannot be distinguished, described and named, then no talk about them is possible. The crux of the problem, then, is how sensation-words can mean sensations. A philosophical thesis was that sensation-words name sensations "privately"; and what is important in naming a sensation is the sensation itself -- its natural expression and its context being irrelevant. This thesis leads to another philosophical view that sensation-words have only one function,

53. Ibid, p. 87.

54. Ibid, p. 93.

55. Ibid, pp. 82 and 89.

56. Malcolm, N., "Philosophical Investigations", PR, Vol. 63, 1954.

57. PI, Sec. 244.

namely description. Wittgenstein is denying only these views about sensation-words. He maintains that it is impossible to name sensations "privately", and that sensation-words have various uses in ordinary language. He would never deny that when a person is in pain, he must be experiencing something (i.e. a particular sensation); but he certainly denies that it is this something which is important so far as the meaning of a sensation-word is concerned. The thought that behind someone's pain-behaviour is the pain itself does not enter into our use of "He is in pain", but what does enter into our use of it is his pain-behaviour, the situation in which pain is ascribed, and our sympathetic, or unsympathetic reaction to him. Thus he does not deny that there are inner-experiences. Indeed he speaks of "a pain's growing more and less" as an example of a mental process. As Malcolm says, "Either to deny that such occurrences exist or to claim that they cannot be named, reported, or described is entirely foreign to Wittgenstein's outlook." Wittgenstein discusses reports of dreams. Discussing the term 'description' he says :

Think how many different kinds of thing are called "description" : description of a body's position by means of its co-ordinates; description of a facial expression; description of a sensation of touch; of mood.

PI, Sec. 24

58. PI, Sec. 154.
 59. Malcolm, *ibid.*, "Philosophical Investigations", PA, Vol. 63, 1954, p. 552.
 60. PI, p. 222, and p. 184.

It means he is denying only a philosophical theory about naming and describing sensations. We do not, and cannot name or describe a sensation in the sense in which we name a tree or describe a room. There is a sense in which 'pain' is the name of a sensation. In this sense 'pain' stands for a sensation, as '0' denotes a number, as 'red' denotes a colour. What we need to notice is the difference between the way 'red' and 'pain' function, although both are names. As Wittgenstein says :

We call very different things "names"; the word 'name' is used to characterize many different kinds of use of a word, related to one another in many different ways.

PI, Sec. 38.

To suppose that 'red' and 'pain' function alike is the sort of error that Wittgenstein is anxious to expose and rebut. Similarly, we can and do describe sensations, but we cannot do it either "privately" or in the manner we describe a room.

Perhaps this word "describe" tricks us here. I say "I describe my state of mind" and "I describe my room." You need to call to mind the differences between the language-games.

PI, Sec. 290.

So, it is not fair to say that Wittgenstein has any "obsession" with the expression of pain. Two things are worth noticing here. First, expressions are the "outward criteria," with which the sign must be connected if it

61. PI. Sec. 590.

is to be a sensation-word at all. Criteria are needed to⁶² use the sign correctly, not to identify my sensations. Secondly, it is only in the case of first-person present-tense use of sensation-words that they are taken to be a part of pain-behaviour; other uses have various other functions. Wittgenstein's main idea is to show how erroneous it is to suppose that sensation-words are only descriptive. So he says, "I am in pain" is not a descriptive sentence at all; its function is not to assert anything. It is, rather, a new pain-behaviour. But Wittgenstein does not maintain that even this sentence (I am in pain) has one and only one⁶³ use. It is only "one possibility". In other contexts it has other uses. As he says, the words "I am in pain" may⁶⁴ be a cry of complaint, and may be something else. Depending on the context, it can be a request for help, or even a pain-report. In short, there is no single use of 'pain', one must look at actual cases to understand its purpose.

We come now to Wittgenstein's use of 'criteria'. Strawson finds in this conception "the old verificationist⁶⁵ horror". Ayer, Carl Wellman⁶⁶ and Thomson have expressed the same view. What these critics have failed to realise is

⁶². PI, Sec. 200.

⁶³. PI, Sec. 244.

⁶⁴. PI, p. 109.

⁶⁵. Wellman, C., "Wittgenstein's Conception of A Criterion", *IR*, Vol. 71, 1962.

⁶⁶. Thomson, J.J. "Private Languages", reprinted in *Philosophy of Mind*, edited by S. Hampshire.

that Wittgenstein is not attacking the notion of "identifying" one's sensations in its ordinary (trivial) sense. In this sense we can identify our sensations, feelings, images. Wittgenstein says that there is no criterion for saying that two images of mine are the same, yet there is such a thing as recognition here, and a correct use of 'same'.⁶⁷ But there is a philosophical sense in which he does deny that we can identify or recognize our own sensations. "He attacks a philosophical use of the word only, the use that belongs to the notion of the private object."⁶⁸ In this sense the identification is "corrigible"; but it makes no sense to say "Oh, I know what 'pain' means; what I don't know is whether this, that I have now, is pain". If a person understands the word 'pain', he cannot be in doubt as to whether he has the right experience (pain). The fact that there is no further process or need of identifying a particular sensation is a reason why the talk of identification is irrelevant, which should not be the case if what is important is the private object. What is really significant, therefore, for the use of sensation-words is the outward criteria. Even when a man is said to identify his sensation (in the non-philosophical sense), he does not isolate it from the rest of his behaviour or the situation in which pain is ascribed.

We find that in Wittgenstein's account of thinking

67. PI, para. 377-78.

68. Malcolm, E., "Philosophical Investigations", PR, 1964, p. 857.

(PI, Secs. 316-394, 427, 501, 540, 633-637, IIXI, pp. 211, 216-223) and intending (PI, Secs. 611-660, IIyIII, xi, pp. 223-24) his general outlook is the same :

- (a) "What is happening now has significance -- in these surroundings. The surroundings give it its importance."

PI, Sec. 583.

- (b) "An 'inner process' stands in need of outward criteria."

PI, Sec. 580.

Gilbert Ryle has said that the "master-issue" with which Wittgenstein was concerned above all others was the nature of philosophy itself.⁶⁹ There is no doubt whatever, that it was one of his main issues from the very beginning. It was his primary aim in the *Tractatus* to determine the genuine nature of the philosophical problems, and to solve them. Similarly, in his later works the questions that occupied him are : what sort of activity is philosophizing? What is the nature of a philosophical problem? How does a philosophical problem arise? In order to understand his views more clearly, it would be better to note the points of agreement and disagreement between the two phases of his philosophical career, so far as the concept of philosophy is concerned.

⁶⁹. Ryle, G., "Ludwig Wittgenstein", A, Vol. 12,

Let us start with the points of resemblance. Perhaps the most important point is Wittgenstein's view that philosophy is not a theory but an activity.⁷⁰ He says in the Tractatus that philosophy does not result in 'philosophical propositions', but rather in the clarification of propositions.⁷¹ He maintains in the Philosophical Investigations that there are no philosophical doctrines or theories. Wittgenstein once expressed this point in this way:⁷² "I hold no opinion in philosophy." He says that philosophy explains nothing; it only describes.

And we may not advance any kind of theory.
We must do away with all explanation, and description alone must take its place. The problems are solved, not by giving new information, but by arranging what we have always known.

PI, Sec. 100.

In philosophy we do not draw conclusions. "But it must be like this!" is not a philosophical proposition. Philosophy only states what everyone admits.

PI, Sec. 500.

One of the reasons why philosophy is not a body of doctrines is that philosophical problems are not scientific in nature :

Philosophy is not one of the natural sciences.
(The word "philosophy" must mean something whose place is above or below the natural sciences, not beside them.).

T 4.111.

70. T 4.112(3)

71. T 4.112(4)

72. Wisdom, J., "Ludwig Wittgenstein, 1889-1951",
N. LI. April. 1959. p. 250.

Similarly, he says in the Philosophical Investigations :

It was true to say that our considerations could not be scientific ones These are, of course, not empirical problems.

PI, Sec. 109.

Wittgenstein is convinced that if there is an empirical problem, i.e., a problem concerning matters of fact, it is the job of the scientist to solve it. Philosophers can have no say here. Philosophical problems, on the other hand, arise when we fail to understand the logic of our language. Philosophy is, therefore, an activity -- an activity of elucidation or clarification.

With this we come to the next important point that is common to both the earlier and the later Wittgenstein. Philosophical activity is linguistic. He maintains that problems of philosophy arise because the logic of our language is misunderstood. He says in the Philosophical Investigations that we are misled by grammar, by the apparent form of language. Philosophical problems are products of the linguistic illusion. Hence, the philosophical activity consists in clarification. Philosophical problems can be solved (or removed) by a careful study of language.

All philosophy is a 'Critique of language'.

T 4.0031.

So he says in his later works :

Philosophy, as we understand the word, is a fight against the fascination which forms of expression exert upon us.

BB, p. 27.

Philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language.

PI, Sec. 109.

But the purpose and method of analysis are, as we shall see, quite different in the two phases. However, according to both the earlier and the later Wittgenstein, philosophy is not a theory; and the problems are based on the misunderstanding of language, and are solved (or dissolved) by understanding the logic of language.

The differences are more important. Although he still believes that philosophical problems arise due to our misunderstanding of the logic of language, he does not think that we can solve them by reductive analysis. He does not think now that the analysis of propositions will reveal their correct logical form, there is no hidden logical form awaiting its analysis by the philosopher. The idea of a correct form is itself a metaphysical idea based on the misunderstanding of our language. It is tied to the notions of "absolutely simple" and "absolutely exact", which are only philosophical assumptions. There is no standard or norm to determine the correct form of either a proposition or a fact. The philosopher's task is not to analyse a proposition, but to understand it. And to understand it means to know not what it depicts or its hidden structure, but what it does, what function it has, what role it plays, what purpose it serves, and the language-games played with it. Propositions are, so to say, already in order. What is

significant for the later Wittgenstein is the fact that words and sentences can be misunderstood. There would be no ~~phi-~~ philosophy if there were no possibility of misunderstanding. It is the possibility of diseases that makes therapies come into existence.

What is, then, the nature of a philosophical problem? In Wittgenstein's view what marks off a philosophical problem is a characteristic unclarity, a certain power to baffle and confuse. A philosopher -- in his philosophical mood -- is bound to be baffled. One who is not lost in puzzlement cannot feel the full force of such problems. According to John Wisdom, Wittgenstein "was always anxious to make people feel the puzzle - he was dissatisfied if he felt they had not done this."⁷³ Like Socrates, Wittgenstein used to point out confusions and absurdities in the philosophical theses which are commonly accepted.

My aim is : to teach you to pass from a piece of disguised nonsense to something that is patent nonsense.

PI, Sec. 464.

When someone is trapped in a philosophical puzzle he is reduced to perplexity. He tries various alternative solutions, but they are in vain. Wittgenstein once described this slippery situation to Malcolm in the following way : "A person caught in a philosophical confusion is like a

73. Wisdom, J., "Ludwig Wittgenstein, 1934-37" Mind, April, 1962, p. 259.

man in a room who wants to get out but doesn't know how. He tries the window but it is too high. He tries the chimney but it is too narrow.⁷⁴ He expresses the same view in the philosophical investigations :

A philosophical problem has the form : "I don't know my way about".

PI, Sec. 123.

One may feel inclined to object : in every branch of knowledge we can find such problems, not in philosophy alone. No doubt we often encounter such difficulties in other fields, but they are solved by bringing in new facts. Questions about the remoter galaxies, the causes of cancer, the living conditions in other planets, are questions whose answers are not known to us. But we do know what sorts of questions they are, and how their answers are to be looked for. These problems are solved when new facts are known. It is the ignorance of facts that creates problems. But a philosophical problem arises typically in cases where we can expect no help from new facts; where new facts are not relevant to the solution of a problem. Certainly it is not ignorance that defeats us in such cases. We know all that is relevant. For example, there is no conceivable new fact which could help us in solving the problem of time. "It is not new facts about time which we want to know. All the facts that concern us lie open before us."⁷⁵ We see all the

74. Salceda, R., Memoir, p. 51.

75. IB, p. 6.

pieces of the puzzle, but not how they fit together. We know all that could help us solve the problem, yet we ~~cannot~~ see clearly. What is missing is the clear vision, something is wrong with the philosopher's way of looking at things. His problem is "not a scientific one; but a ⁷⁶muddle felt as a problem". He is a man suffering from a conceptual illness. His understanding is tied up in knots. His sanity is surrounded by madness. ⁷⁷To say still bluntly, he is a pathological case :

The philosopher is a man who has to cure himself of many sicknesses of the understanding before he can arrive at the notions of the sound human understanding.

MF, IV, 53.

Wittgenstein maintains that an important business of philosophy consists in diagnosis. Philosophical methods are like ⁷⁸"different therapies." It is the job of philosophy to cure the conceptual diseases.

The philosopher's treatment of a question is like the treatment of an illness.

PI, Sec. 255.

Granted that philosophical problems are pathological perplexities : How do they arise? What is it that baffles our understanding? What misleads us? Wittgenstein finds

76. Ibid, p. 6.

77. MF, IV, 53.

78. PI, Sec. 133.

that most of the philosophical problems arise from misconceptions about language. In his account of the several ways in which language misleads us three elements can be roughly distinguished, namely, (i) assimilation of various uses, (ii) pictures; and (iii) the tendency to isolate words from their actual contexts.

To take the first point first, Wittgenstein says that
79
our "craving for generality" misleads us to assume that all words are used in the same way. We are led to believe, especially when we are doing philosophy, that there is a single function common to all individual words, and a single function common to all sentences. This tendency to assimilate different uses of words and sentences to a common function is strengthened by their grammatical classifications. It is a plain fact that the grammatical forms of our language are less various than the actual uses of words. To take one example, 'believe', 'walk', 'see', 'run', 'think' are verbs, but they do not have the same use. "X is running" and "X is thinking" are alike so far as their grammatical form is concerned, but their functions are quite different. That is to say, while 'running' denotes a process, 'thinking' does not. But we are misled by the grammatical similarity and conclude that 'thinking' denotes a private, hidden process.

Similarly, we think that all noun-words have to perform the same job, i.e., to name objects (visible or invisible). 'pain', 'itch', 'thought' etc. function in the same way in which 'tree' 'table' etc. do. In the same way, we assimilate grammatically similar sentences to one another. In particular, we take descriptive sentences as our paradigms or models.⁸⁰

Closely connected with the first point is our liability to be captivated or enslaved by what Wittgenstein calls "pictures". In a sense, it includes the first point. Generally it happens that a grammatical resemblance induces us to accept a particular use of a word as the standard use of words of that type. But, as Warnock points⁸¹ "the issues involved here may go far beyond grammar." As an example, Warnock gives the notion of proof. There are proofs of many sorts -- geometrical proofs, scientific proofs, police-court proofs, proofs of the pudding in the eating, and many others. But it may be that a philosopher becomes obsessed with one kind of proof, and^{reject} others. He is held captive by a particular proof; he is under the grip of a "picture". He may hold, for instance, that nothing exists except what can be proved in his standard way. Wittgenstein gives several examples⁸² of such pictures: we picture an idea as a mental entity;⁸³ we picture the mind as a queer kind of entity or a queer kind

⁸⁰. PI, Sec. 11, 122.

⁸¹. Warnock, O.J., English Philosophy Since 1900, p. 83.

⁸². IB, p. 41.

⁸³. PI, Sec. 123.

⁸⁴
 of place, and we picture remembering, meaning, understanding,
 intending, expecting etc., as mental processes similar ⁸⁵ to
 physical processes, only occurring privately. Wittgenstein
 concludes that when we are in the grip of a philosophical
 problem, a certain picture has held us captive. ⁸⁶

There are two ways in which a picture can hold us
 captive : by being so strong that no other picture of the
 thing in question seems conceivable to us, and by restricting
 the kinds of things we think one can sensibly say about what-
 ever it is that is pictured. ⁸⁷ The philosopher is a prisoner
 of his own pictures.

A warning against a possible misunderstanding is in
 order. By a picture, Wittgenstein does not mean a conscious
 and definite image. "To have a certain picture of something,
 as Wittgenstein uses the term, is to have a certain view of
 it, to think of it in a certain way, to think of it in
 accordance with some model or other." ⁸⁸ Further pictures in
 themselves are harmless. They hold us captive only when we
 take them too seriously, when we push the analogies too far.
 In other words, pictures create perplexities only when they
 are misapplied.

84. BB, p. 40.

85. PI, Secs. 305, 604.

86. PI, Sec. 115.

87. Pitcher, G., The Philosophy of Wittgenstein,
 pp. 202-3.

88. Ibid, p. 203.

Thirdly, philosophical problems arise when we take words out of their actual contexts and consider them in isolation. When we are doing philosophy, we do not care to look at the actual uses of a word; rather, we try to determine its function merely by speculation. In this way, we determine a particular ideal and impose it on our actual language: Moore, for example, while considering the notion of real, proceeds in a very peculiar way. Instead of looking at the various uses of the word 'real', he asks: what property is it that all those things which we call real have in common? Now it is quite clear that there is no such property at all. The term 'real' is used to exclude a wide variety of oddities, defects, or deviations, and not to assert a common property. And we can know from the actual context what we mean to exclude in a particular case. What has been said for 'real' holds true for almost all the words that are important in philosophy, such as, 'time', 'mind', 'thinking', 'know', 'believe', 'proposition', 'truth', 'fact', and so on. Thus Wittgenstein finds that a philosophical ⁸⁹ puzzle arises from the misunderstanding of language. The plain man, or even the philosopher in his non-philosophical states of mind, finds no puzzle while using these words. For example, he uses temporal words like 'time', 'before', 'after', 'simultaneous', 'coexistent', 'yesterday', 'tomorrow', 'past', 'future' with perfect ease. But the

philosopher, in his philosophical moods, picks up a particular use and puts peculiar interpretations on it.

When we do philosophy we are like savages, primitive people, who hear the expressions of civilized men, put a false interpretation on them, and then draw the queerest conclusions from it.

PI, Sec. 104.

Wittgenstein thus reaches the conclusion that there are no genuine problems in philosophy. The so-called problems of philosophy are only muddles produced by the misunderstanding of the logic of language. We must, however, remember certain points in this connection. First of all, he did not reach this conclusion by taking a stock of the history of philosophy. He was never seriously interested in what his predecessors had said. He was reacting to his own earlier doctrines: He attributes his earlier doctrines to a superstition or an illusion, and says that the philosopher's task is to dispel confusions. Next, he finds that these confusions and oversimplifications are not misunderstandings in the ordinary sense of the term. They are not the mistakes that are committed by a particular man of lesser intelligence. They are the mistakes that originate in the very forms of our language. The source of the superstitious beliefs about language is language itself. It is language that bewitches our intelligence; superstitions are produced by grammatical illusions through a misinterpretation of our forms of language. Moreover, such confusions, Wittgenstein says, are

so deeply rooted in our habits of thought that they are not even noticed.

The aspects of things that are most important for us are hidden because of their simplicity and familiarity. (One is unable to notice something-- because it is always before one's eyes). The real foundations of his enquiry do not strike a man at all. Unless that fact has at sometimes struck him.--And this means : we fail to be struck by what, once seen, is most striking and most powerful.

PI, Sec. 50

Granted that philosophical problems are linguistic puzzlements, an important question remains to be answered: how can we solve them? We have seen how, according to Wittgenstein, language traps us when we are doing philosophy. The job of a sound philosophy, then, is to help us to escape from these traps. Thus the way to the solution of a philosophical problem lies in discovering how and why the logic of language has been misunderstood. The philosophical problem is a symptom of a conceptual disease, and the philosopher's business is to discover its cause. As Wittgenstein says : The philosopher's treatment of a question is like the treatment of a disease.⁹¹ For this, what we must do, Wittgenstein tells us, is to examine the language-games we play with the words which are important in philosophy. We must look at the actual uses of words.

When philosophers use a word "knowledge", "being", "object", "I", "proposition", "name" -- and try to grasp the essence of the thing, one must always ask oneself: is the word ever actually used in this way in the language-game which is its original home? -- what we do is to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use.

PI, Sec. 116.

A warning is in order. What has been said about the use of words may give the impression that the philosopher's job is really that of a lexicographer, i.e., an easy and passive affair to collect the various uses of a word in a haphazard manner. Referring to the views of the later Wittgenstein, Russell says that he (Wittgenstein) "seems to have grown tired of serious thinking and to have invented a doctrine which would make such an activity unnecessary."⁹² This is certainly a caricature of Wittgenstein's views. He never meant to collect specimens after specimens of the uses of a word without any purpose, in a completely random manner. The philosopher is required to proceed systematically in the study of a puzzling word, select his examples carefully with a view to shedding light on a particular problem.

And this description gets its light, that is to say its purpose, from the philosophical problems.

PI, Sec. 109.

What is, then, our method? As is expected from Wittgenstein he does not recommend any general rule to be

⁹². Russell, B., My Philosophical Development, p. 217.

followed in solving each and every philosophical problem. Every problem has a special nature, and should be studied as such; there is no common method, or the method.

There is not a philosophical method, though there are indeed methods, like different therapies.

PI, Sec. 135.

However, our main purpose is a clear view of the use of our words. In other words, what Wittgenstein is aiming at is conceptual clarification. This is achieved by studying various actual and possible uses of the puzzling words. This requires a great deal of skill and imaginative insight. As Wittgenstein said in a lecture, he sought to give "the morphology of the use of an expression". Philosophical analysis is concerned with the solution of philosophical problems, and this is done by a systematic study of the uses of a word; and not by producing a list of these uses. Although there is no set of definite rules to be prescribed, Wittgenstein suggests certain devices or methods as aids to the philosopher. In order to have a complete and clear view of the use of a word, it is not sufficient merely to look at the actual uses; for this we require some other devices. Wittgenstein has suggested some such methods, namely, "finding and inventing intermediate cases", and inventing "primitive language-games."

As we know a philosophically puzzling-word is used in several different language-games. What is required to dispel a philosophical confusion is to know not only the different language-games, but the connections between them, which are not always obvious. We need, for this, examples⁹⁴ of intermediate cases which reveal their connections to us. In the Brown Book Wittgenstein mentions such expressions as "seeking in our memory", "looking for my friend in the park"⁹⁵ and "looking up the spelling of a word in a dictionary."⁹⁶ In the Philosophical Investigations, he says that we must not only find, but also invent, intermediate cases. Not only this, in order to have a full grip over the matter it is profitable to imagine language-games which ought to make good sense if the world were differently constituted; but which cannot be played in the universe as it is.

Let us imagine the following : The surfaces of the things around us (stones, plants etc.) have patches and regions which produce pain in our skin when we touch them (perhaps through the chemical composition of these surfaces. But we need not know that). In this case we should speak of pain-patches on the leaf of a particular plant just as at present we speak of red patches. I am supposing that it is useful to us to notice these patches and their shapes; that we can infer important properties of the objects from them.

PI, Sec. 312.

Philosophers who hold the view that 'pain' denotes a "private"

⁹⁴. PI, Sec. 122.

⁹⁵. BB, p. 129.

⁹⁶. PI, Sec. 173.

sensation, have thought that "I have a pain" and "I see something red" function in the same way. Wittgenstein shows that they could have similar functions, in a different world; but not in the world we live in.

Another way of understanding the function of words is to study the similarity and difference between the term in question and other related words and expressions. To mention one case :

The word "agreement" and the word "rule" are related to one another, they are cousins. If I teach anyone the use of the one word, he learns the use of the other with it.

PI, Sec. 224.

Another technique that Wittgenstein employs is that of inventing primitive language-games. Our actual language-games are usually complicated; it is, therefore, advantageous to invent elementary language-games which would shed light on certain points which could not be easily discovered in the former. But these primitive games are not "ideal simples" which are hidden in the actual language-games. They illuminate us by their agreement and differences with the actual language-games. They are not preparatory studies for a future regularization of language. "The language-games are rather set up as objects of comparison which are meant to throw light on the facts of our language by way not only of similarities, but also of dissimilarities." It is not,

then, Wittgenstein's aim to reform or alter our actual language. On the contrary, it is his main task to attack all linguistic alterations; for it is linguistic-alterations that are responsible for philosophical puzzlements.

Philosophy is thus descriptive. It is not the business of the philosopher to explain anything. We must do away with all explanation, and description alone must take its place.⁹⁸ 'Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language; it can in the end only describe it.⁹⁹ It leaves everything as it is. Philosophy simply puts everything before us, and neither explains nor deduces anything. Everything lies open to view. There is nothing to explain. What is hidden is of no interest to us.¹⁰⁰ The problems are solved, not by giving new information, but by arranging what we have always known.¹⁰¹ But description is neither aimless nor random. What we call "descriptions"¹⁰² are instruments for particular uses. And the work of the philosopher consists in assembling reminders for a particular purpose.¹⁰³ Thus the aim of description is to give a "perspicuous representation" of the uses of a word, or "the morphology of the use of an expression", with a view to dispel the puzzlement.

98. PI, Sec. 109.
 99. PI, Sec. 124.
 100. PI, Sec. 126.
 101. PI, Sec. 109.
 102. PI, Sec. 261.
 103. PI, Sec. 127.

It is important to know why Wittgenstein is opposed to explanation. Philosophy, according to Wittgenstein, "only states what everyone admits."¹⁰⁴ This is so because philosophy is not concerned with empirical or scientific problems.¹⁰⁵ But traditional philosophers tried to explain certain words by inventing new language-games and queer entities corresponding to them. They tried to find out unity of rules in the diversity of uses of an expression. They went wrong by reducing their relation to a simple formula.¹⁰⁶ They were actually dreamers; they dreamt with words.¹⁰⁷ This type of solution only leads to deeper confusions. What is needed is a careful description.

Finally, when we command a clear view of the use of our words, there is no problem. The aim of philosophical reasoning is what Wittgenstein calls complete clarity. This complete clarity does not lead to the solution of the problem -- since there is no genuine problem to be solved -- but to its disappearance.

For the clarity that we are aiming at is indeed complete clarity. But this simply means that the philosophical problem should completely disappear.

PI, Sec. 133.

104. PI, 509, also 129.
 105. PI, 108.
 106. PI, p. 190.
 107. PI, Sec. 368.

When the misunderstanding, which is at the root of the problem, has been exposed, the problem has not been solved, it has vanished.

The results of philosophy are the uncovering of one or another piece of plain nonsense and of bumps that the understanding has got by running its head up against the limits of language. These bumps make us see the value of the discovery.

PI, Sec. 119.

Wittgenstein says that the philosopher is like a fly in a fly-bottle -- going round and round within a closed space, without ever finding the way to escape. He fails to realize that the door has been open all the time. According to Wittgenstein the genuine philosophic reasoning consists in liberation :

What is your aim in philosophy? -- To show the fly the way out of the fly-bottle.

PI, Sec. 309.

But is it not that Wittgenstein has destroyed everything? He is aware of this objection, and says :

What we are destroying is nothing but houses of cards and we are clearing up the ground of language on which they stand.

PI, Sec. 118.

If I do speak of a fiction, then it is of a grammatical fiction.

PI, Sec. 307.

Now, it is necessary to examine Wittgenstein's views on philosophy somewhat critically. Wittgenstein's account of philosophy has raised two interrelated questions :

- (i) Is ordinary language entirely adequate?
- (ii) Is the job of the philosopher only negative?

Let us begin with the first question. Many philosophers whom Wittgenstein offends hold the opinion that he regards ordinary language as "sacrosanct", that he speaks in the name of nothing higher than the "status quo", and that he "has forbidden philosophers to tamper with them"¹⁰⁹ (our ordinary expressions). Pole maintains, while criticizing Wittgenstein's views, that "language is naturally a growing thing,"¹¹⁰ that "Wittgenstein's whole treatment of language takes no account of the necessity or possibility of its growth; one may go further, it comes near to prohibiting it."¹¹¹ He further says that "we must recognise the extension of language, and the application of old terms in new spheres."¹¹² He says that we play "philosophical language-game" and so far as Wittgenstein denies this possibility his own aims are solely "conservative and negative."¹¹³ Some other philosophers have received the same impression.¹¹⁴ These impatient critics seem to have overlooked what Wittgenstein

^{109.} Pole, D., The Later Philosophy of Wittgenstein, p. 57.

^{110.} Ibid., p. 83.

^{111.} Ibid., p. 82.

^{112.} Ibid., p. 85.

^{113.} Ibid., p. 97.

^{114.} For instance, Ernest Gellner's book Words and Things is full of such remarks.

says in the following lines :

A reform of ordinary language for particular purposes, an improvement in our terminology designed to prevent misunderstandings in practice, is perfectly possible. But these are not the cases we have to do with.

PI, Sec. 132.

If so, one may object, Wittgenstein is blowing hot and cold in the same breath. Has he not said that "philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language?"¹¹⁵

What is, then, Wittgenstein's view about the nature and status of ordinary language? And how is philosophy related to ordinary language? As is clear from the passage quoted above, Wittgenstein is not opposed to the possibility of growth and development of ordinary language. He never says that ordinary language is sacrosanct and static. If there is a proper occasion, a genuine demand for either a new expression or a new use of an old expression, then a reform of ordinary language is not only possible but most urgently needed. Let us mention some cases : ambiguity, inconsistency, vagueness and inexactness of expression are familiar shortcomings in language which have been and can be satisfactorily corrected. Similarly, we can come across a new phenomenon for which a new name is needed. Again, we can be dissatisfied with the way in which we have expressed ourselves, and

¹¹⁵ PI, Sec. 124.

struggle to make a point clearer by a new choice of words. Thus, there are genuine complaints which can be removed by such remedies as the introduction of new terminology (for instance, 'neutrons'), a better choice of words, or an arbitrary decision to resolve vagueness. But when we are doing philosophy we are generally not concerned with such complaints. The traditional philosopher wants to invent special philosophical uses of words which, according to Wittgenstein, is not possible. Of course, a philosopher can use such terms as "sense-data", "analytic" etc.—terms which no ordinary language philosopher criticizes on the ground that they are not ordinary. But he cannot use words, ordinary or technical, in extraordinary ways. However, this is exactly what the traditional philosopher does. He takes words out of the language-games in which they are generally used, and uses them in some queer way. Let us take an example. Russell asks, "what is the evidence for the existence of the external world?" Russell treats it as if it were a question clearly understood; but this is not so. When we are interested in the evidence for something, we know what would count as evidence for it. But in the present case, it is by no means plain what is to count as evidence for the "existence of the external world". The fact is that nothing in the way of evidence will satisfy a philosophical sceptic. Moreover, as Stanley Cavell has pointed out, any attempt to

116. Cavell, S.,—"The Availability of Wittgenstein's Later Philosophy", *PA*, Vol. 71, 1962, p. 91.

defend the metaphysical use of an expression on the ground that it is not meant in its ordinary sense destroys the point of the philosophical discovery.

With regard to the second question, Wittgenstein has said, as we have seen above, that philosophical problems arise when language goes on holiday, that the philosopher's task is to dispel confusion, that the results of philosophy are the uncovering of one or another piece of plain nonsense, that what we are destroying is nothing but houses of cards and we are clearing up the ground on which they stand, and that his aim is to show the fly the way out of the fly-bottle. From these aphoristic remarks one may get the impression that for Wittgenstein philosophical problems are all about language, and that they are nothing but plain nonsense, merely houses of cards. Both these impressions are based on the misunderstanding of his views.

Wittgenstein does not suggest that philosophical problems are about language. Of course they have their root in language, but they are about knowledge, memory, truth, space and time, perception, sensation, understanding, intention and innumerable other things. It would be a howler to maintain that either Wittgenstein or his followers are interested in language alone, and not in facts. They adopt linguistic analysis as their method simply because though, not about language, the philosophical problems spring from language.

When Wittgenstein says that philosophical problems are illusions and brain cramps, it should be remembered that he is repudiating his own illusions. It is a sort of repentance or self-condemnation, and that is why we find a vehemence or even rudeness in his style. But when he speaks of philosophical doctrines as houses of cards, he does not mean that they are trivial. Although they spring from queer and distorted uses of language, they have the character of depth.

The problems arising through a misinterpretation of our forms of language have the character of depth. They are deep disquietudes; their roots are as deep in us as the forms of our language and their significance is as great as the importance of our language.

PI, Sec. III.

Or, as he says elsewhere, this is not a stupid prejudice. It helps us to realise the limits of our language. Moreover, "Wittgenstein did not think that all philosophical problems must arise only from ordinary language."¹⁷ He knew well that the specialised language of any subject is liable to give rise to philosophical problems. He himself worked on philosophical problems that arise in mathematics.

Next a philosophical problem, according to Wittgenstein, has the form : I don't know my way about. If so, then its successful solution makes us see our way about. Although

17. Paul, G.A., "Wittgenstein", included in *The Revolution in Philosophy*, edited by A.J. Ayer, p. 96.

philosophy does not give us new information, nor does it alter our language, it does make a difference, in the sense that by it we achieve a clear view of things which were always open to us but could not be seen clearly. In the words of Warnock, "We leave things as they are; but perhaps for the first time we come to see them as they are."¹¹⁹

But there is an aspect of Wittgenstein's conception of philosophy which can hardly be accepted. It is excessively negative. Wittgenstein has correctly shown, I believe, that philosophical problems should not be confused with the problems of natural sciences. Whatever metaphysics may be, it is neither a science, nor a science of sciences -- a more general theory of the universe. But, as Strawson has pointed out in his critical notice of the *Philosophical Investigations*, "we might make room for a purged kind of metaphysics, with more modest and less disputable claims than the old."¹²⁰

Many philosophers would agree with Wittgenstein¹²⁰ that most of philosophical problems arise from the misuse of language. When words and expressions or the concepts they describe are thought about in isolation from their actual contents, there is a danger of losing one's way. It is,

119. Warnock, G.J., "English Philosophy since 1900," p. 86.

120. Strawson, P.F., "Philosophical Investigations Critical Notice", *Mind*, Vol. 63, 1954, p. 78.

121. "..... it is difficult not to share the conception of philosophy held by the first philosopher of the age." P.F. Strawson, "Philosophical Investigations: Critical Notice", *Mind*, Vol. 63, 1954, p. 78.

therefore, an important business of philosophy to dispel particular philosophical confusions by describing actual uses of words. But it does not mean that the sole purpose of philosophical analysis is therapeutic; i.e., to dispel confusions. As Strawson says, "even if we begin with a therapeutic purpose, our interest might not exhaust itself when that purpose is achieved; and there can be an investigation of the logic of sets of concepts, which starts with no purpose other than that of unravelling and ordering complexities for the sake of doing so."¹²¹ Again, we may like to present the facts systematically, as suggested by Wittgenstein himself, so that we may be able to see them in new¹²² light.

Philosophical activity is thus bound to go beyond the merely negative idea of therapy. We want to understand our conceptual patterns -- the concepts that we use in various activities of our life -- in detail and systematically. In order to have a clear view of the concepts that we use in our life and in our knowledge of the universe, it is necessary to see clearly how they work. The therapeutic diagnosis is incomplete, and leads to the descriptive metaphysics. It has been said against the practice of analytic philosophy as pure research work, I think with some justification, that it is uninteresting and unphilosophical, if not trivial. However,

¹²¹. Ibid, p. 78.
¹²². PI, Sec. 401.

if we undertake the systematic study of concepts with the view to understand the nature of our experience, then it becomes both interesting and philosophical.

This is still not all. In order to understand the nature of experience, it is not enough to describe the concepts that we actually employ. We can and do get fresh insight into our life and experience by altering the accepted conceptual schemes. It is possible to describe the same phenomena through different conceptual schemes. We can say, then, that the analytic philosophy is not opposed to the speculative philosophy; but the two should not be confused. We must not forget that the philosopher's reconstruction of concepts and expressions does not add to our knowledge; at the least it enables us to understand our actual concepts more clearly, and at the most it provides us with a new way of looking at things. In any case, metaphysics is not nonsense, and there are its own advantages. Philosophy is, in this aspect, a vision, a *crisi*. A metaphysical system is not a discovery of new facts (although it may lead to the discovery of new facts), but rather a kind of re-description, a shift of stand, a new angle of vision. There may be many *crisis*, but there is nothing like the only correct *crisi*. The mistake of the metaphysician consists not in inventing a speculative scheme, but in assuming that it is the actual scheme. Once he succumbs to this illusion he is led to derive solutions of particular problems from his general scheme. For example, there is

not only a Hegelian way of looking at things, but a definite Hegelian solution of any real problem that may ever arise.

CHAPTER - VIII

INFLUENCE OF THE LATER WITGENSTEIN

It can be said without any exaggeration that Wittgenstein's later writings have exerted an enormous influence on contemporary philosophical thought. No other philosopher has contributed more to the present stage of linguistic philosophy, particularly the post-war English philosophy. Although Wittgenstein published nothing concerning his later ideas during his life-time, his lectures and unpublished notes were in wide circulation, and when his *Philosophical Investigations* was posthumously published many philosophers were already familiar with the main ideas of this work.

To trace adequately the influence of Wittgenstein in every detail is a task far beyond the limits of this work. I wish here to set down the general features and trends of Wittgenstein's influence on contemporary English philosophy. Obviously, therefore, my attempt here will be to give a general outline, not a full account with elaborate historical details.

It would be a mistake to think that Wittgenstein is the only thinker who is responsible for the growth and development of the linguistic philosophy. This movement is

a product of many forces of which Wittgenstein is, of course, the most dominating one. The intellectual background, which was necessary for its development, was already prepared by Russell, Moore, the earlier Wittgenstein and the logical positivists. Moreover, in its emphasis on ordinary language and commonsense, contemporary English philosophy is the return in a new mould of the earlier English tradition, which was broken for a short period by the neo-Hegelians. However, the influence of Russell and the logical positivists is only negative. They showed that the proper business of philosophy

1. Note : "Relief in the philosophic efficiency of ordinary language is a recurrent habit in British Philosophy." (P.L. Heath, "The Appeal to Ordinary Language" reprinted in *Clarity is Not Enough*, edited by H.D. Lewis, p. 188). Berkeley felt that many of the 'blunders and paralogisms' of philosophy were due to 'the fault and scantiness of language' and to men's failing to 'settle the meaning of their words'. As a remedy, he often advocates that we follow our ordinary ways of speaking. But he also introduces 'truth and strictness of speech' instead of ordinary language. Reid maintains that 'the language of mankind can furnish good evidence of opinions which have been early and universally entertained', that 'every distinction which is found in the structure of a common language is a real distinction'. (The lines within inverted commas are quoted by A.N. White in his *G.E. Moore : A Critical Exposition*, pp. 181-188).

Thus Berkeley was expressing a traditional aspiration when he claimed credit for his plain, untechnical English. Locke and Hume have expressed similar ideas. "But though the classical British philosophers realized that the distortion of and departure from plain, common English was a prime source of philosophical befuddlement and nonsensical construction, and sometimes even foresaw that a new sort of 'logic and critic' might be evoked from the study of ideas and words, they never realized quite how important these insights were, and they consequently failed to follow them up by developing this new sort of 'logic and critic'. This task was left for the philosophers of this and future centuries" -- A.C.N. Flow, *Logic and Language*, First Series, Introduction, p. 6.

is analysis, and not construction of speculative systems. They were opposed to philosophizing in the 'grand style'. They were, rather, interested in the analysis of propositions, sentences, meaning and concepts. Their programme was essentially reductive, that is to say, they tried to solve philosophical problems by analysing complex statements into simple propositions. They conceived language to be truth-functional. They developed certain theories of meaning to justify their official claims. They also tried to invent artificial languages on the model of calculus to eliminate the defects of ordinary language. The later Wittgenstein rejected all these claims with the result that today both logical atomism and logical positivism have only a historical value. Their importance lies in the fact that they made language the main concern of philosophy. Originally it is due to their efforts that philosophy came to be regarded as the clarification of language instead of the search for Reality and Truth.

But the influence of Moore is more direct. And it is said that the later Wittgenstein is like Moore in his technique. There is no doubt that the approach of linguistic analysis in some respects is similar to Moore's practice of analysis. But there are certain very wide differences between Moore and the linguistic philosophers including Wittgenstein. In order to understand Wittgenstein's influence it would be advantageous to discuss, briefly, Moore's con-

ception of analysis and its difference from that of Wittgenstein.

Moore says that the world or the sciences would not have suggested to him any philosophical problems. What suggested philosophical problems to him is "things which other philosophers have said about the world or the sciences."² He found philosophers saying things which were in flat contradiction with the views which we all believe. They denied what everyman believes to be true. He thought that philosophers were led to these puzzling conclusions due to hastiness and confusion. Philosophers tried to answer questions without considering exactly what questions they were trying to answer. In this way Moore turned to analysis. In his famous article 'A Defence of Commonsense',³ Moore tried to defend the commonsense views about the world. But he emphasized that while he was certain of the truth of these basic beliefs, he was not at all clear about the analysis of their meaning. Analysis, again becomes the main task of philosophy.

It is said that Moore was concerned with the defence, not of commonsense, but of ordinary language. "The Philosophizing of most of the more important philosophers has

2. Moore, G.E., The Philosophy of G.E. Moore, edited by F.A. Schilpp, p. 14.
3. Contemporary British Philosophy, second series, pp. 193-225.

consisted in their more or less subtly repudiating ordinary language. Moore's philosophizing has consisted mostly in his refuting the repudiators of ordinary language.⁴ If this interpretation is correct, then Moore was doing the same thing which linguistic philosophers are doing today. But Moore had no such intentions. Actually speaking Moore never went explicitly into methodological questions. He preferred to practise analysis rather than propound a theory about it. This procedure has led to diverse interpretations. Sometimes it is said that the appeals to commonsense and ordinary language are merely two interpretations of the same technique.⁵ But they are quite different methods. Again it would be a mistake to go to the other extreme by saying that Moore was never defending ordinary language but merely trying to use it.⁶ Moore's recourse to ordinary language is mainly intended to discover what a philosophical thesis comes to when put in ordinary language, and to indicate what in fact are the beliefs of commonsense by referring to what we all ordinarily say. The appeal to ordinary language is, for him, mainly a means and subsidiary to the appeal to commonsense. Moore appeals to ordinary language for the following reasons. First, it is an indication of what we all believe. Secondly, he

4. Malcolm, R., 'Moore and Ordinary Language' included in *The Philosophy of G.E. Moore* edited by Schilpp, p. 380.

5. Barnes, W.H.S., *The Philosophical Predicament*, p. 42.

6. Black, M., 'On Speaking with the Vulgar', *PR*, 1949, pp. 616, 621.

thinks that we are on the right track if we keep to ordinary use and are going wrong if we abandon it or correct it. Sometimes he explicitly maintains that ordinary use is the criterion of correctness of use. Thirdly, ordinary language is in several ways used as a touchstone for testing philosophical views.

But Moore never says that ordinary language is ipso facto correct, nor does he argue against other philosophers simply for attempting to alter it. What he defends is always the truth of certain very common propositions, and not the propriety of the language in which they are expressed; and he takes the view that other philosophers have held doctrines incompatible with the truth of these propositions, not that they have merely rejected the common use of words.⁷ Moore thinks that philosophers are often confused and argue invalidly. The philosopher's job is not to refute the plain truths, but to understand how these truths ought to be analysed.

Moore's main interest lies in investigating neither the truth nor the meaning of statements, but in giving an analysis of their meaning. However, the problem of giving an analysis of a proposition was thought to be, in a sense, the problem of trying to know what the proposition meant. Holding the

7. Warnock, G.J., English Philosophy since 1900, p. 22.

view that the meaning of an expression is something behind that expression, Moore usually conceives analysis in a non-linguistic manner. What we have to do is to inspect or divide or distinguish the notion for which the expression is used. This mode of conceiving analysis leads him to certain unsolvable difficulties. Moore's concept theory leads him to take the inspection metaphor too literally and to suppose that what we do is look at the meaning, the concept, which is before our mind, but hidden in the clothes of linguistic expression. Similarly, interpreting the use of the word analysis literally, he takes it in the sense that something complex, something constructed, is to be decomposed, and that its elements and modes of construction are to be made clear. Both these notions have been rejected by Wittgenstein.

Moore clearly draws our attention to the phenomenon of philosophical paradox and disagreement. But he does not diagnose it fully. He fails to go to the root of the matter. Similarly, his conception of analysis is restricted to the meaning of statements. He puts forward a theory of meaning instead of describing the functions or uses of words. Although he defends ordinary language and criticises philosophers for deviating from it, he fails to realise its full implications.

We are now in a position to compare and contrast Moore's technique with the linguistic analytical approach of Wittgenstein (and others). Both adopt analysis as the proper

business of philosophy, and emphasise the need of clarification. But for Moore, analysis is not the whole business of philosophy. The nature of analysis also differs. Moore's interest lies in finding out the exact meaning of an expression. His analysis leads to exact and precise questions and answers. Wittgenstein, on the other hand, finds that no expression of philosophical interest has a fixed boundary of meaning. His analysis consists of a survey of the manifold uses of the words, which lead to philosophical puzzlement. Moore is interested in the meaning, while Wittgenstein investigates the uses of words. The linguistic philosophers, following Wittgenstein, are interested in the uses and functions of words, and not in their meanings.

Moore's remedy for a philosophical problem is to look more attentively into what is before one's mind. Of such an account Wittgenstein would say : We imagine 'that we have to describe extreme subtleties'. Moore is a target of Wittgenstein's attack when he says : The picture is of "something that lies within, which we see when we look into the thing; something that lies beneath the surface, and which an analysis digs out". Wittgenstein's view is that everything is open; nothing is hidden. What is needed is to bring words back from the philosophical to actual everyday use. That is, we need description, not explanation. Problems are solved not by 'digging out' analysis, but by descriptive analysis. To sum up, although both Moore and Wittgenstein

defend analysis and ordinary language, they part company on two very important issues. First, Moore is interested in the meaning of a word, and not in its use. Wittgenstein rejects this view. Instead of looking upon the meaning of a word we are advised to look how the word is used. Secondly, Moore looked upon analysis as a source of knowledge. He believed that it led to propositions which were true or false, while for Wittgenstein the very idea of philosophical truths was dangerously naive. On both these issues contemporary philosophers have followed Wittgenstein.

We have seen that for Moore analysis was only a means. Moreover, he did not conceive it as an inquiry into language. It was, according to him, concerned with concepts, propositions and facts, and not with linguistic expressions. "Nevertheless, the reduction of philosophy to an inquiry into language was a reasonable consequence of the position which he held." His practice naturally tended to give rise to the idea that philosophy is clarification and not discovery. Warnock correctly points out that "In its influence the practice was far more important than the theory."

Obviously the recent linguistic philosophy is derived from various sources. The philosophies of logical atomism and logical positivism prepared the necessary background for its

G. Ayer, A.J. 'Philosophy and Language', reprinted in Clarity Is Not Enough, edited by H.D. Lewis, p.403.
P. Warnock, G.J. English Philosophy since 1900, p. 20.

development. They made it clear that the primary job of the philosopher is to clarify language. In his own way G.E. Moore strengthened the idea that philosophy is basically analytical. He defended both commonsense and ordinary language. Linguistic philosophy would have been impossible without these influences. But the chief architect of the new philosophical mansion is Ludwig Wittgenstein. It is primarily due to his efforts that we talk of a revolution in philosophy. It is due to him that philosophers have become more sophisticated in their procedures; they are now more clearly aware of what they are doing. It is Wittgenstein who is the originator of the view that philosophy is an inquiry into ordinary language.

Before we proceed to trace Wittgenstein's influence, some points of explanation are in order. First, it is not my aim to discuss all philosophical trends of the present-day English philosophy. The contemporary philosophy with which I am concerned is that of which Wittgenstein and Wisdom in Cambridge, and Ayer, Austin and Strawson in Oxford, may be cited as prominent exponents, viz., the linguistic philosophy. However, the views with which these philosophers are concerned, though originated and developed in Cambridge and Oxford, are not confined to these universities. This way of doing philosophy has attracted a large number of contemporary philosophers, and there are many who think in similar ways not merely in other English universities, but also in

other countries. At times it will be useful to refer to their views. Secondly, these philosophers do not constitute a school or movement in the strict sense. They do not accept a common title or an official name. Sometimes they are described as 'therapeutic positivists'—a name which is certainly derogatory. They share no basic tenets, and serve no common cause. Not only this, they shift from general pronouncements and uniform methods. They adhere to Wittgenstein's dictum that "there is not ¹⁰ a philosophical method". Further, apart from their reluctance to subscribe to any general formula, there are serious differences amongst them. But there is certainly a 'family resemblance'—to employ a phrase of Wittgenstein — in their views, which may enable us, however inadequately and loosely, to describe certain general features. Thirdly, a few words must be said about the method I intend to follow. First I shall discuss certain general features which characterize the linguistic philosophy, and show their connection with the ideas of Wittgenstein. Next, I shall take up the two different versions of this philosophy, discuss their most prominent exponents, and finally show how they go beyond Wittgenstein.

It can be said without any hesitation that the main trend of contemporary English philosophy is linguistic analysis. A revolutionary change has occurred in philosophy —

a revolution vis-a-vis all traditional concepts of philosophy. The traditional philosophies were concerned with the nature of truth and reality, while the present-day philosophy is concerned with the logic of language. It is believed that philosophic problems are intimately connected with language, and most of them, if not all, arise from our misunderstanding of the logic of language. Whether one agrees with this conception of philosophy or not, it is no longer possible to ignore it. It is, therefore, important to examine briefly some of its basic characteristics.

Let us start with the notion of meaning. Preoccupation with the theory of meaning can be said to be the most fundamental characteristic of the twentieth century Anglo-Saxon philosophy. It was believed by the traditional philosophers that language refers to "things" and expresses "thoughts". Now ordinarily there is nothing absurd with this view. It is perfectly correct English to say these things in certain standard situations. But there is a tendency to be misled by these modes of talk. It gives rise to a picture of language which is a constant source of many errors. It suggests erroneously that thoughts are ghostly, invisible acts; that meaning is a mental activity; that the meaning of a word is the object for which it stands; and that meaning is dependent on truth-conditions. Philosophers of language have challenged all these views. Credit goes to Wittgenstein for exposing the absurdities inherent in these views about language, meaning and thought.

The theory of meaning which has been widely held by all traditional philosophers, in one form or the other, maintains that all meaningful words refer to things; and that these things are their meanings. It is obviously correct to say that '7' means 7, 'tree' means tree, and 'beauty' means beauty. But these are simply semantic points about the use of words, which, when approached philosophically, give rise to a picture, according to which all words refer to real (or possible) objects which are their meanings. Wittgenstein himself succumbed to these temptations in the *Tractatus*; but he was first to realise their misleading character. Mill advocated in his system of logic that all words are names. As Ryle says, "it was a tragically false start."¹¹ Mill also calls complex expressions 'many-worded names'. Again, as Ryle says, "this initially congenial equation of words and descriptive phrases with names is from the outset a monstrous howler."¹² This equation "has been responsible for a large number of radical absurdities in philosophy in general and in philosophy of logic in particular."¹³ It was a fetter round the ankles of Meinong, Frege, Moore, Russell and the earlier Wittgenstein. People find it natural to assimilate all words to names, and the meanings of words to the bearers of these alleged names.

11. Ryle, G., "The Theory of Meaning" in *British Philosophy in the Mid-Century*, edited by C.A. Maco, p. 242.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 243.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 243.

However, it must be admitted that Mill himself allows that some words like 'is', 'often', 'not', 'of', and 'the' are not names. He also makes a distinction between denotation and connotation. Similarly, Frege makes a distinction between sense and reference; and Russell and Wittgenstein admit that a sentence is not a list of names. All these distinctions imply the fundamental distinction between naming and saying. It was Wittgenstein, who first generalised this crucial point in the *Tractatus*; but he still adhered to the naming theory. He still had one foot in the denotationist camp. It was only later still, says Hyle, "that Wittgenstein consciously and deliberately withdrew his remaining foot from the denotationist camp."¹⁴ We have already discussed Wittgenstein's criticism of the naming theory and need not repeat it here. Following Wittgenstein, Hyle says : "The use of an expression, or the concept it expresses, is the role it is employed to perform; not anything or person or event for which it might be supposed to stand."¹⁵ Further, he accepts Wittgenstein's analogy of games with certain modifications.¹⁶ Thus he concludes : "Expressions do not mean because they denote things; some expressions denote things, in one or another of several different manners, because they are significant. Meanings are not things, not even very queer

14. *Ibid.*, p. 234.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 235.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 235-56.

things. Learning the meaning of an expression is more like learning a piece of drill than like coming across a previously unencountered object. It is learning to operate correctly with an expression and with any other expression equivalent to it.¹⁷

To mention another instance, Austin reaches the same Wittgensteinian conclusion in his article 'The Meaning of a word'.¹⁸ Wittgenstein says in the Blue-Book :

What is the meaning of a word?

Let us attack this question by asking, first, what is an explanation of the meaning of a word; what does the explanation of a word look like?

.....
The questions "what is length?", "what is meaning"?
"what is the number one"? etc., produce in us a mental cramp

Ibid, p. 1.

Ryle compares the question, "What are meanings?", with the questions, "What is purchasing-power?" or "What are exchange-values?"¹⁹ Similarly Austin gives a number of questions as specimens of nonsense :²⁰ What-is-the-meaning-of a word?, What-is-the-meaning-of any word?, What-is-the-meaning-of a word in general?, What is the-meaning-of-a-word?, What is the 'meaning' of a word? etc. And he tries to make it clear that the phrase 'the meaning of a word' is, in general, if not always, a dangerous nonsense-phrase.²¹ Now, it is obvious that, despite

17. Ibid, pp. 256-257.

18. Austin, J.L., Philosophical Papers, edited by Urason and Warnock.

19. Ryle, G., 'The Theory of Meaning', in British Philosophy in the Mid-Century, edited by C.A. Mace, p. 259.

20. Austin, J.L., 'The Meaning of a word', Philosophical Papers, edited by Urason and Warnock, p. 23.

21. Ibid, p. 24.

their difference in procedure Wittgenstein, Ryle and Austin are making the same point, i.e., the general question, ²² "What is the meaning of a word?" is a pseudo-question. What we can legitimately ask is the meaning of a particular expression. And in addition, they warn us not to search for a something which is the meaning even of a particular word. In the same article, Austin sets forth ways in which philosophers could go wrong, and he concludes that philosophers who talk about "meanings", "universals", or "concepts" have gone wrong. It is fallacious, according to Austin, to look for 'the meaning (or designatum) of a word'.²³ He gives two reasons for this temptation: first, there is the curious belief that all words are names; second, when we have given an analysis of a certain sentence, containing a word or phrase '...', we often feel inclined to ask of our analysis. 'What in it is "x"?'.²⁴ His conclusion is that there is no simple and handy appendage of a word called 'the meaning of (the word) "x"'. All these points, to mention a few of several others, clearly demonstrate Wittgenstein's findings that the naming theory of meaning is untenable.

What is important, therefore, is the use of a particular expression in ordinary language. In this connection Wittgenstein's analogy of 'language-game' is enormously helpful. In

22. Ibid, p. 20.
 23. Ibid, p. 20.
 24. Ibid, p. 20.

order to know the meaning of an expression we must look at its actual use. What is most significant about the use of an expression is that we learn it in certain standard circumstances. These circumstances are, according to Wittgenstein, its primary home. A word has to play different roles in various multiple situations. And there is no fixed boundary of meaning. No word, excepting those that are coined for some special purpose, have a fixed unitary meaning. It is, therefore, certain rules and conventions that give meaning to a particular word. And to know the meaning of a word we must look at its actual use. This is, in short, Wittgenstein's view, which has completely changed our angle of looking at language.

Wittgenstein's emphasis on the use of words has made contemporary philosophers return to ordinary ways of saying things. The typical attitude of philosophers has been, says Findley, "to stare at words rather than to use them or to see how they are used, and, seen in that glazed stare, words invariably become magical, mysterious and 'profound'." ²⁵ He further says in the typical Wittgensteinian tone, "If we relax this glassy, philosophic stare we begin to see words simply as counters used in a game, or as tools or materials employed in a certain work," ²⁶ We find that words are used in a variety of ways, and that if situations are changed

25. Findley, J.E., 'Some Reactions to Recent Cambridge Philosophy', in *British Philosophy in the Mid-Century*, edited by Mace, p. 24.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

we could use them differently. We see the purpose of saying certain things in certain ways, and what is more, the reason why certain men have altered their ways of talk about things. If we study how words are used in our language, we can realize how far the metaphysical language takes us, and where it breaks down. Thus the primary emphasis of contemporary English philosophy is on how words are used in ordinary language. If we want to understand words, signs and sentences, we must not think, but look how people operate with them, how they are used in various language-games, what purpose they serve. And we must not forget the most important fact about language that words are not private tools. We cannot use them in any way we like. Language is a public phenomenon, and its uses are dependent on certain conventions and rules. It is, therefore, important to know how people teach the use of a given word to others, and how they were themselves taught the use of such words in the first instance.²⁷ This emphasis on use has stimulated many controversies concerning the meaning and status of ordinary language. The opponents of this movement maintain that ordinary language has no philosophic efficacy, nay, it has no clear sense at all. But in the opinion of its exponents, the proper way to understand the significance and nature of the concepts and categories in terms of which we carry on our thinking is to²⁸ "watch them at work."²⁹ Thus we have two new slogans which

27. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

28. Strawson, P.F., 'Construction And Analysis', in the *Revolution in Philosophy*, edited by A.J. Ayer, p. 103.

29. Granson, J.O., *Philosophical Analysis*, p. 170.

characterize the entire linguistic philosophy : Don't ask for the meaning, ask for the use; and Every statement has its own logic.

There is another important point concerning ordinary language brought to light by the emphasis on the use of words. We realise that words have innumerable functions to perform. Traditional philosophers did not pay sufficient heed to the various functions of language. In their opinion language is only descriptive. We have already seen how, according to Wittgenstein, our craving for generality misleads us. But when we take the trouble to look at the different language-games, we find that words are employed to perform innumerable different jobs. Wittgenstein gives a long list of the multiplicity of language-games.³⁰ Following him Hyle says : "In contrast with the denotationist assumption that almost all words, all phrases and even all sentences are alike in having the one role of naming, the assimilation of language to chess reminds us of what we know ambulando all along, the fact that there are many kinds of words, kinds of phrases, and kinds of sentences -- that there is an indefinitely large variety of kinds of roles performed by the expressions we use in saying things."³¹ Again, like Wittgenstein Hyle says that even the *prima facie* simple notion of naming turns out on

30. Fl, Sec. 23.

31. Hyle, G., 'The Theory of Meaning', in *British Philosophy in the Mid-Century*, edited by Maco, p. 286.

examination to be full of internal variegations. 'Fido', 'Saturday' and 'Mr. Pickwick' are proper names, but they function in quite different ways.

Let us now give some examples of the various functions of words. Words have descriptive, evaluative, fictional, deductive, explanatory and performatory uses, to mention only a few. Some distinguished philosophers have studied some of these uses in detail. For instance, take the study of 'performative utterances' by Austin.³² Performative utterances have the peculiarity of being statements grammatically,³³ but of being neither true nor false-- and yet not nonsense. Such utterances do not report or describe a fact, but constitute the performance of an activity. They are used to ^{do} something. But what is after all the use of collecting specimens after specimens of the different kinds of linguistic expressions? Linguistic philosophers tell us that it helps us to understand the nature of philosophical problems, if not to solve them. Philosophical problems are generated, they say, by confusing the diverse uses of words.

Further, the investigation of the use and functions of words enables us to realize the obvious, but often forgotten, fact that meaning is independent of truth-conditions. The

32. Austin, J.L., 'Performative Utterances', *Philosophical Papers*, edited by Urmson and Warnock.
33. *Ibid*, p. 223.

earlier Wittgenstein maintained with Russell that 'having a sense' is identical with 'being true or false'. Following Wittgenstein, the logical positivists developed the verification-theory of meaning, which made all non-descriptive statements either emotive or nonsensical. The logical positivists divided discourse into cognitive and emotive meanings. All non-descriptive uses of words, if they are not nonsensical, are dumped together to rust in the emotive lumber-room. What they failed to realize is the fact that description is only one language-game out of several others. And even all descriptive expressions do not function in some unique way. If we study carefully how words are actually used and what functions they perform, we can see clearly that expressions which are neither true nor false, are yet not nonsense.

The following points would be sufficient to bring out the weakness of any theory of meaning that identifies meaning and truth-conditions. In the first place, expressions that are not sentences are also meaningful. Secondly, it does not apply to sentences other than the indicative ones. More strictly it does not even apply to all indicative sentences. And even where ^{it} applies, a distinction has to be drawn between meaning and truth-conditions. It is, therefore, correct to say that the verification theory of meaning is itself metaphysical.³⁴ As Austin says, "The principle of Logic, that

34. Wisdom, J., 'Metaphysics and Verification', reprinted in *Philosophy and Psycho-Analysis*, pp. 51-101.

'Every proposition must be true or false', has too long operated as the simplest, most persuasive and most pervasive form of the descriptive fallacy,³⁵ He gives a number of utterances which have been taken to be statements, but "are not in fact descriptive, nor susceptible of being true or false."³⁶ Among these are performative utterances, formulae in a calculus, definitions, value judgments, and statements in fictions.

We can have no arbitrary theory of meaning. There is no a priori test to determine the meaning of an expression. Language is based on conventions. It is, therefore, necessary to look at the use of a word to know its meaning. Strawson³⁷ has explained this point well in his paper 'On Referring'. What Strawson rejects is Russell's claim that every sentence must be true or false or meaningless. According to Strawson, an expression is meaningful if there are rules for its use. Meaning is, thus, dependent on use and we can say employing the cryptic remark of Wittgenstein, "the meaning of a word³⁸ is its use in the language."

We can now discuss the relation of thought and language. The theory, which is rejected by contemporary philosophers, misconstrues the unquestionable fact that words are expressions of thoughts. It misleads into forming a picture of

35. Austin, J.L., 'Truth' - Philosophical Papers, edited by G. S. G. and Warnock, p. 80.

36. Ibid, p. 89.

37. Strawson, P.F., 'On Referring', Mind, 1960.

38. PI, Sec. 43.

language according to which our thoughts are inaccessiblely private, invisible, ghostly acts. That is to say, our thoughts are independent of language, which may or may not accompany our speech. Some advocates of this theory go still further, and maintain that "No verbal statement is the adequate expression of a proposition."³⁹ They condemn language as being hopelessly defective. The theory in its official form can be traced in Aristotle's works, but its modern exponent is supposed to be Descartes.⁴⁰ This theory, it is said, misinterprets the logic of mental concepts, and presents them as referring to inner, occult processes. In short, it has led to a vast assemblage of insoluble questions.

The linguistic philosophers point out, following Wittgenstein, that in order to know the logic of mental concepts we must look at their use. The relation between an expression and the thought it conveys is established by certain conventions. If it is not, we ought, for example, to be able to say "a-b-c-d-" and mean by it "The weather is fine".⁴¹ It is very difficult. Why should it be so, if language is an external accompaniment of thought? Wittgenstein gives another example : say "Its cold here" and mean "Its warm here".⁴²

39. Whitehead, A.N., Process and Reality, p. 20.

40. Hyle, G., The Concept of Mind.

41. PI, Sec. 508.

42. PI, Sec. 510.

Can you do it? Further, he launches a direct attack : "If thinking and speaking stood in the relation of the words and the melody of a song, we could leave out the speaking and do the thinking just as we can sing the tune without the words."⁴³ Wittgenstein has marshalled a battery of arguments against the official theory of thought and mental concepts which we need not consider here. He suggests to look at the actual language-games in which thought-expressions are used. We do not learn mental concepts by looking into our bosoms, nor can we ever teach anyone to describe events so private and so inaccessible. We learn these concepts in certain situations, and their use is determined by certain conventions. We cannot use the words 'think', 'doubt', 'believe' for animals, because we have no clear use of these words in connection with creatures that never speak. We can be sure that we mean or understand something only if we can talk and act appropriately.

Contemporary English philosophy, thus, dispenses with the traditional conception of language and thought which interprets them in terms of ghostly processes in us, or ghostly meanings hanging before us. It is concerned rather with the way in which words are used. The basic characteristic of the linguistic philosophy, we are concerned with, is that words function like tools whose performances are determined by certain rules and conventions. Next, words do not

mean by virtue of some occult property, they get their meanings from the situations in which they are used. Hence, the criterion of their use is public, and not private. Language is, so to say, a public game, and, therefore, involves a number of players. In other words, language is not private. It does not mean that we cannot talk about our sensations, feelings, images, moods etc. We can and do talk about them, but this is possible because there are definite sets of public criteria. We can have speaking only where there are conventions.

Having discussed the theory of language, we now pass on to show how linguistic philosophers deal with many of the traditional problems of philosophy and the philosophical activities. Credit goes to Wittgenstein for making philosophers fully aware of the nature of their work. "By comparison no one previously seems to have had an inkling of what philosophers are really doing in their queer, hopeless, passionate disputes, disputes in which there are neither agreed premises nor rules of arguments, and which terminate, with approximately equal frequency in an impasse, a trisism⁴⁴ or a paradox." The linguistic philosophy, following Wittgenstein tries to show that philosophical problems are pseudo-problems or puzzles, as they arise from a misunderstanding or abuse of linguistic forms. Some of the linguistic philoso-

44. Findley, J.N., Language Mind And Value, p. 28.

phers (known as Cambridge philosophers) try also to show how there is a genuine sense and meaning in some of these puzzles and paradoxes. And some of them (known as Oxford philosophers) give a systematic linguistic exposition of philosophical concepts. These tasks are, in their opinion, as lofty as any traditional conception of philosophy, though more modest in approach.

Following Wittgenstein, the linguistic philosophers hold the view that most of the philosophical problems have a verbal origin, are not genuine problems, and the solutions put forward by the traditional philosophers are merely recommendations for linguistic reforms. Philosophical problems have a paradoxical ring; like the Heraclitean flux they give the appearance of 'is' and 'is not'. Or, bewilderment⁴⁵ is a typical characteristic of philosophers. They cannot be settled by observing facts. The problems are solved, not by giving new information, but by arranging what we have always known.⁴⁶ The proper business of philosophy is, in the words of Ryle, "to rectify the logical geography of the knowledge which we always possess."⁴⁷ These philosophers are, therefore, as they claim, adherents of no philosophical doctrines whatsoever. They believe in description, and not in explana-

45. Note : Wisdom and Ryle have given some very interesting cases of this characteristic of perplexity or dilemma.

46. PI, Sec. 109.

47. Ryle, G., The Concept of Mind, p. 7.

tion. And their aim is either therapeutic or pure research work. Philosophy has no true resemblance to science. It does not augment our knowledge, nor does it demonstrate new theorems. Its sole function consists in describing the logic of concepts and the words used to express them. For example, in order to know how problems about mind, reality, good etc., arise, and thereby to resolve them, we must consider how 'mind', 'reality', 'good' are used in ordinary language. Philosophical problems arise because of our inability to command a clear view of the diverse uses and functions of the words which are used to express a philosophical concept. The traditional philosophers argue for or against a philosophical problem, but the linguistic philosophers enquire into the sources of the problems. They do not argue for or against a philosophical theory. Another source of philosophical puzzlement is the temptation to be held captive by certain models or a particular use of a word. Failing to realise other uses of a word we make it the standard use. We may think, for example, that space is a big container (a big box). The linguistic philosophers point out that words do not have a single use which may be accepted as the standard use. There is no one logically correct use of a word. The 'logical geography of words' helps us to realise how we are bewitched by language. The grip of the picture is loosened, and the fly is able to see the way out of the fly-bottle.

Before we pass on, we may summarise our account given above. Until recently, we have seen, philosophers have not

troubled themselves with what philosophy is, or how doing philosophy differs from doing science, or doing mathematics, or doing theology. Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* was the first book dedicated to fixing the position of philosophy. "In England, on the whole, interest was concentrated on Wittgenstein's description of philosophy as an activity of clarifying or elucidating the meanings of the expressions used, e.g. by scientists; that is, on the medicinal virtues of his account of the nonsensical."⁴⁸ In his later writings Wittgenstein demolished the denotationist theory of meaning. If the meaning of a word is not an entity or nominee but a role, then philosophy is not concerned even with meanings -- it is misleading, if not wrong, to say that philosophy is the science of meanings. Philosophy is concerned, according to the later Wittgenstein, with the morphological description of the different uses of words. "Hence, following Wittgenstein's lead", says Ryle, "it has become customary to say, instead, that philosophical problems are linguistic problems -- only linguistic problems quite unlike any of the problems of philology, grammar, phonetics, rhetoric, prosody, etc., since they are problems about the logic of the functionings of expressions."⁴⁹ He further says, "such problems are so widely different from, e.g., philological problems, that speaking of them as linguistic problems is, at the moment, as Wittgenstein foresaw, misleading people as far in one direction, as

48. Ryle, G., 'The Theory of Meaning', *British Philosophy in the Mid-Century*, p. 262.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 263.

speaking of them as problems about Meanings or Concepts or Propositions had been misleading in the other direction. The difficulty is to steer between the Scylla of a Platonistic and the Charybdis of a lexicographical account of the business of philosophy and logic.⁵⁰"

While it is true that the exponents of contemporary English philosophy are greatly influenced by Wittgenstein, it is equally true that they have worked out, in their own way, what they have learnt from Wittgenstein. Some of them are first rate thinkers, and have dealt with the philosophical problems independently. However, for the concept of philosophy and the method of philosophising, if not for the solutions of particular problems, they are indebted to Wittgenstein. Strawson says about the Philosophical Investigations :

"Right or wrong, Wittgenstein's particular doctrines are of the greatest interest and importance. But the value of the book as a model of philosophical method is greater still It will consolidate the philosophical revolution for which, more than anyone else, its author was responsible."⁵¹

We can now discuss the main trends of the linguistic philosophy. It has been practised by two main philosophical groups, though unlike the Vienna Circle, they do not constitute organised schools. The first group consists of those philo-

50. Ibid, p. 263.

51. Strawson, P.F., 'Philosophical Investigations : Critical Notice', Mind, 1954, p. 99.

sophers who were influenced more or less directly by Wittgenstein himself. The chief exponents of this group are Wisdom, Malcolm, Waismann and Anscombe. The other group is that which developed at Oxford under the leadership of Kyle and Austin. Other distinguished members of this group are Strawson, Hart, Hampshire, Hare, Urnson and Warnock. Both of these groups accept Wittgenstein's dictum that "ordinary language is all right". They also agree on the views that philosophical problems are linguistic in origin; that they arise not because our language is defective or inadequate, but because philosophers misdescribe and misconstrue it; and that the way to solve or dissolve these problems is to investigate how our language is in fact used. But there are some important differences which separate the two groups. Philosophers of the first group study the various uses of a philosophical term and its equivalent expressions in order to solve (or dissolve) the philosophical problems arising from their misuse. They are interested in the diagnosis of the philosophical puzlements, and for them philosophy is therapeutic. Some of them conceive philosophy on the psycho-analytic lines, and try to find out the hidden causes behind a philosophical problem. For them, the proper task of philosophy is to trace the philosophical puzlements to their roots to show why we are tempted to say what we say. However, not only use, misuse too is said to be illuminating. Even while propounding confusions the past philosophers did try to get at something. They have said, in their own inadequate and misleading ways, things which

might be illuminating and important. They are, thus, not in favour of discarding metaphysics. Oxford philosophers, on the other hand, are more interested in the actual details of ordinary language. Some of them, especially Austin, are interested in the minute details of ordinary language. They investigate ordinary language for its own sake, and describe it as pure research work. For them the therapeutic aim becomes secondary. Austin carried this disinterested investigation of ordinary language farther than anybody, and "he himself foresaw the eventual absorption of his sort of enterprise in an expanded science of linguistics."⁵² Next, they tend to draw general philosophical conclusions from the actual details of ordinary language, while the philosophers of the first group "restrict themselves to the solution of specific problems."⁵³ They give a systematic investigation of the logic of sets of concepts : Ryle's *Concept of Mind* and Strawson's *Individuals* are good examples of their method. Ryle even warns us not to take analysis in the sense of a piecemeal investigation. He likens the task of philosophers to that of the cartographer than to that of the chemist or the detective.⁵⁴

We may now come to the first group of the linguistic philosophers. Out of a number of philosophers who have followed

52. Chappell, V.C., (editor), *Ordinary Language*, Introduction, p. 3.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

54. Ryle, G., 'The Theory of Meaning' - *British Philosophy in the Mid-Century*, edited by Mace, p. 224.

and used Wittgenstein's technique Wisdom's name is most impor-
35 tant.

His work is truly Wittgensteinian, and he has acknowledged his debt to Wittgenstein in almost all his works.

He says, to give only one instance, "My debt to him is enormous and is by no means to be measured by the few places

where I happen to mention such and such a point comes from

him or put a W. against an example of his." 36 However, he is

not a mere imitator. While following Wittgenstein most

closely, his work is original and independent. And, as I

shall try to show, Wisdom goes beyond Wittgenstein in certain

aspects and works out certain themes of Wittgenstein more

clearly and explicitly.

Let us see, first, how far Wisdom accepts Wittgenstein's analysis of philosophical problems. Like Wittgenstein he

treats philosophical problems as being idle. Therefore, he

proposes like Wittgenstein, not to give any direct answer,

but rather to inquire into the origin of the problem. He

agrees with Wittgenstein that philosophical statements are

37 really verbal. "A philosophical answer is really a verbal

recommendation in response to a request which is really a

request with regard to a sentence which lacks a conventional

use whether there occur situations which could conventionally

38 be described by it." He says that a philosophical statement

35. Other prominent exponents of this group are :
Norman Malcolm, Alice Ambrose, G.E.M. Anscombe and
G. Paul.

36. Wisdom, J., *Other Minds*, p. 1, footnote 1.

37. Wisdom, J., 'Philosophical Perplexity' reprinted
in *Philosophy And Psycho-Analysis*, p. 36.

38. *Ibid.* p. 36.

is neither a jumble like 'cat how is up', nor is it in conflict with conventional usage like 'There are two white pieces and three black so there are six pieces on the board'.
59
"It just lacks a conventional usage."

Having described that philosophical statements are verbal, he says also the contradictory.
60
Philosophical statements usually have a non-verbal air. "And their non-verbal air is not an unimportant feature of them because on it very much depends their puzzlingness."
61
Moreover, though really verbal a philosopher's statements have not a merely verbal point. The point of philosophical statements is peculiar. "It is the illumination of the ultimate structure of facts, i.e. the relations between different categories of being or (we must be in the mode) the relations between different sub-languages within a language."
62
It is not the stuff, but the style that stupefies.

Wisdom reaches the same point in his other articles collected in *Philosophy And Psycho-Analysis*. Talking of the causes of philosophical puzzles he says, "ordinary language suggests analogies which puzzle us".
63
We have already seen how according to Wittgenstein pictures hold us captive.

59. Ibid, p. 36.

60. On this point Wisdom says in a footnote : "I do not wish to suggest that Wittgenstein would approve of this sort of talk nor that he would disapprove of it." Ibid, p. 37.

61. Ibid, p. 37.

62. Ibid, p. 37.

63. 'Metaphysics And Verification' reprinted as above p. 86.

Similarly, Wisdom says in 'Philosophy, Metaphysics And Psycho-Analysis, that philosophers try to grasp complex and unmanageable patterns by using models, other patterns which they have grasped.⁶⁴ We know how the model of a hidden stream is misleading as a model for consciousness. Stating the nature of philosophical theories he says, "The peculiarity of philosophical conflicts has only lately been grasped."⁶⁵ Philosophical theories such as 'Matter (or Mind) does not exist, are neither theories nor theorems; they are what they sound like -- paradoxes; and philosophical questions are not questions (scientific) nor problems (logic) -- but are more like riddles⁶⁶" Wisdom distinguishes philosophical disputes from two other types of dispute. Empirical disputes are settled by observation and experiment, and logical disputes by reference to a 'strict rule of usage'. But philosophical controversies are quite different in nature. Of all sorts of philosophical controversies, Wisdom takes special interest in philosophical scepticism. Philosophical doubts such as "I can never really know what another person is feeling" are chronic, queer and unnatural. A philosophical doubt is peculiar, says Wisdom, because of its exceptional attitude to evidence. It is not caused by lack of evidence, nor can it

64. Wisdom, J., 'Philosophy, Metaphysics And Psycho-Analysis' reprinted as above, p. 274.

65. The implicit reference is perhaps to Wittgenstein.

66. Wisdom, J., 'Philosophy And Psycho-Analysis' reprinted as above, pp. 176-77.

be removed by the production of more. It arises from one
or more of the following reasons :

- (i) where there is an infinity of criteria for deciding whether S is P -- all can never be present, yet no number short of infinity can suffice;
- (ii) where there is a conflict among the criteria for S's being P. -- e.g. 'Is a tomato a fruit or a vegetable?';
- (iii) where there is a hesitation to jump from the criteria (even the infinite all) to the conclusion -- e.g. from the outer to the inner.

Wisdom maintains that in all such cases philosophers are dissatisfied with our ordinary usage. They are advocating a linguistic innovation. But it is dangerous to say that philosophical problems are meaningless or mere linguistic confusions. And it is on this point that Wisdom's originality (and departure from Wittgenstein) is most clearly exhibited.

We have already seen how according to Wittgenstein himself, philosophical problems are brain cramps or intellectual diseases, and the proper business of philosophy is therapeutic, i.e. to cure us of the philosophical puzzlements. He also maintains that although rooted in linguistic confusions, philosophical problems are not trivial or superficial. They have, rather, the character of depth. Wisdom has developed

these themes with remarkable originality, and has reached the conclusions which were not explicitly discussed by Wittgenstein himself. Wisdom finds that metaphysical theories are not only misleading, but also illuminating. As Passmore has pointed out, "unlike many other contemporary philosophers, Wisdom is deeply interested in art, religion and personal relationships, about all of which he has made illuminating remarks. Perhaps that explains why, in some measure, he is sympathetic towards metaphysics; nobody who takes literature (or psycho-analysis) seriously is likely to succumb to the doctrine that whatever is worth saying can be said clearly and precisely, or to be satisfied that only true statements can be illuminating." ⁶⁸ Wisdom holds that false statements about the usage of words may be philosophically very useful and even adequate provided their falsity is realised and there is no confusion about what they are used for. The philosopher can say anything if he is careful.

Wisdom develops his analysis of metaphysical doctrines with reference to that of Wittgenstein. Commenting on the latter's view, with which he is in full agreement, Wisdom says: "But this is not enough. Wittgenstein allows that the theories are philosophically important not merely as specimens of the whoppers philosophers can tell. But he too much represents them as also symptoms of linguistic penetration." ⁶⁹

68. Passmore, J., *A Hundred Years of Philosophy*, p. 436.
 69. Wisdom, J., 'Philosophical Perplexity', reprinted in *Philosophy And Psycho-Analysis*, p. 41.

The last sentence is very important as it expresses the main difference between Wittgenstein and Wisdom. He proceeds to describe how philosophical statements are misleading. In the first place, they are misleading by having a non-verbal air. The philosopher laments that we can never really know what is going on in someone else's mind, as if he can dream of another world where we can know it. Secondly, philosophical statements mislead when by the use of like expressions for different cases, they suggest likenesses which do not exist, and by the use of different expressions for like cases, they conceal likenesses which do exist. Then, he describes the positive or useful aspect of philosophical theories. Philosophical theories are illuminating, according to Wisdom, when they suggest or draw attention to a terminology which reveals likenesses and differences concealed by ordinary language.⁷⁰ Metaphysical doctrines are no doubt ridiculous and false, but "there is good in them, poor things."⁷¹ Take, for example, the statement that no empirical proposition can be known with certainty to be true. One may hold that this assertion is obviously false. The proposition that, for instance, some cats are black is both an empirical assertion and is known with certainty to be true. But the philosopher's assertion, according to Wisdom, has an important point which

70. Ibid, p. 41.

71. Ibid, p. 41.

is generally overlooked. It can be worked out as follows. When it is said that the proposition "Some cats are black" is known with certainty to be true, it may give the impression that it is like the proposition "The internal angles of a triangle are equal to 180° ". But there is an important difference. While it makes sense to say that we could be mistaken about the first assertion, it makes no sense to say that we could be mistaken about the latter one. The philosopher is powerfully struck by this point, and recommends the use of 'probably' before every empirical proposition. No doubt, he expresses himself absurdly, but he does so because he has noticed something. Thus the similarities and differences, in which the philosopher is interested, are similarities and differences in the use of sentences. Philosophical paradoxes are useful, Wisdom thinks, so far as they reveal these similarities and differences which are apt to be overlooked. The verbal recommendation that the philosopher makes is not pointless, is not prompted wholly by confusion, "but partly by penetration"⁷². If so, "philosophers should be continually⁷³ trying to say what cannot be said."

The philosopher's doubts are ridiculous and yet interesting. What is it that makes them so tempting? Why should verbal recommendations be debated so passionately? For a convincing reply to these questions, Wisdom turns to psychoanalysis. He writes in a footnote: "The treatment is like

⁷². Ibid, p. 46.

⁷³. Ibid, p. 50.

psycho-analytic treatment (to enlarge on Wittgenstein's analogy) in that the treatment is the diagnosis and the diagnosis⁷⁴ is the description, the very full description, of the symptoms.⁷⁴ The philosopher's doubts remind us of the neurotic's chronic doubts. He says elsewhere : "The big words of metaphysics have an appeal which is wide and deep and old and we cannot fully understand and resolve the riddles they present without understanding that appeal".⁷⁵ He makes this point more clear in a different context : "The phantasies and models, illuminating but distorting, which metaphysical philosophers and psycho-analysts try to bring to light are unconscious."⁷⁶ He says that we are at once dominated by a model and yet unconscious of it.⁷⁷ Thus, taking a clue from Wittgenstein, Wisdom connects philosophical investigations with psycho-analysis.

It must, however, be noted that Wisdom has used Wittgenstein's analogy (of therapy) in a sense which he might not have approved. No doubt, Wittgenstein talks of 'brain cramp' and 'therapy', but he does not seem to use them literally. At least one thing is certain, he never tries to explain philosophical theories in terms of the unconscious. To be fair to Wisdom, it must be said that he himself admits differences between philosophy and psycho-analysis, but he also

74. Wisdom, J., *Other Minds*, p. 2.

75. Wisdom, J., 'Philosophy And Psycho-Analysis', reprinted in *Philosophy And Psycho-Analysis*, p. 181.

76. Wisdom, J., 'Philosophy, Metaphysics and Psycho-Analysis', reprinted as above, p. 277.

77. *Ibid*, p. 278.

finds many connections between the two : (a) how philosophical discussion is the bringing out of latent opposing forces; (b) how we find that besides the latent linguistic sources there are non-linguistic and much more hidden factors which subtly cooperate with the features of language to produce philosophies; (c) how, in consequence, a purely linguistic treatment of philosophical conflicts is often inadequate; (d) how the non-linguistic sources are the same as those that trouble us elsewhere in our lives.

Lazerowitz has further extended Wisdom's ideas and a reference to his thoughts cannot be ignored. He operates with Wisdom's main thesis that philosophical doctrines are verbal recommendations, backed by unconscious motives. He has developed the therapeutic method to its extreme limits, where it becomes an empirical theory about philosophical doctrines. He connects philosophy with psycho-analysis still more directly. He holds that a philosophical theory is not a theory and a philosophical argument is neither a demonstration nor a refutation. He explains a philosophical theory with the help Freud's analysis of the mind. "As is well known, the mind according to psycho-analytical geography consists of three main regions, the conscious, the pre-conscious, and the unconscious, and we may say that a philosophical theory is a bridge with three piers, one in each region of the mind.

78. Wisdom, J., 'Philosophy And Psycho-Analysis', reprinted as above, p. 181.

At the pre-conscious level a piece of altered terminology is introduced, accepted, or rejected; at the conscious level this creates the intellectual illusion that a theory about the world, either true or false, is being pronounced; and for the least accessible part of our minds, the unconscious, the philosophical words actually do express a number of thoughts which play a role in the determination of our inner stability.⁷⁹ He maintains that a philosophical theory is a holiday re-editing of language to express a hidden wish. He believes that psychoanalysis is relevant in a very special way to philosophical utterances. "It alone can discover for us what they really say, as against what they delusively appear to say. Psychoanalysis brings to our conscious awareness the non-verbal things they are unconsciously made to express, and it also explains the durability of the illusions."⁸⁰

We must discuss now the other main group of ordinary language philosophers, which grew up at Oxford and has dominated the platform of contemporary English philosophy. Before we discuss some individual philosophers, it would be useful to note certain general points. It is said that the Oxford philosophers have perverted Wittgenstein's teachings. Let us try to understand the basis of this accusation. The

79. Lasserovits, M., 'The Hidden Structure of Philosophical Theories', reprinted in *Studies in Meta-philosophy*, p. 217.

80. Lasserovits, M., 'The Relevance of Psycho-analysis to Philosophy', reprinted as above, p. 256.

Oxford philosophers, unlike the Cambridge Wittgensteinians, have used, rather than followed, Wittgenstein's ideas. Wittgenstein is, no doubt, the greatest single influence; but at Oxford, Wittgenstein's ideas entered a philosophical atmosphere which had its own rich traditions. Most of the Oxford philosophers are trained in classical philosophy, and Aristotle is their favourite philosopher. Aristotle himself based his philosophical discussions on ordinary language. For example, when he raises the question, "whether the virtues are emotions", he argues that virtues are not emotions, since we are not called good or bad on the ground that we exhibit certain emotions but only in respect of our virtues and vices. And, he further says, an emotion is said to 'move' us whereas a virtue is said to 'govern' us. Everywhere in the *Nicomachean Ethics* this sort of argument is used, which we may describe as an appeal to ordinary language. Cook Wilson, Ross and Price are other important philosophers who usually appeal to what is 'correct' to say. Passmore rightly remarks: "At Oxford, then, Wittgenstein's ideas were grafted on to an Aristotelian-philological stock; the stock has influenced the resultant fruits which, amongst other things, are considerably drier and cooler than their Cambridge counterparts." Thus, Oxford philosophy is not purely Wittgensteinian, either in style or in plan.

Let us see this point in a little more detail. The main interest of the Oxford philosophers is the elucidation of the logic of concepts and expressions. This emphasis on the elucidation of expressions represents a departure from the Wittgensteinian view that philosophy is an activity of dissolving puzzles. In the process of dissolving philosophical problems it was realized that these problems arose because of deviation from the ordinary logic of certain concepts. This realization was due to Wittgenstein. But for the Oxford philosophers, the interest in the logic rather than the deviation became paramount. They conceived philosophy as an independent, positive study of the logic of concepts, rather than a negative activity of clearing up traditional mistakes. They are interested in the logic of terms that are used to express philosophical concepts, i.e. in the standard uses of such terms as 'see', 'know', 'true', 'I', 'sensing', 'feeling', 'thinking', 'good' etc. They describe the logic of these terms without constructing artificial languages, and believe that a consideration of 'how we use words' is at least the beginning, if not the end, of a clear understanding of philosophical problems.

However, it is equally true that we cannot conceive of Oxford philosophy coming into existence without Wittgenstein's researches. It is mainly Wittgenstein who is responsible for the recent revolution in philosophy. To put very generally, the following ideas accepted by the Oxford philo-

sophers, are due to Wittgenstein : that philosophical problems arise because of deviation from ordinary language; that they can be solved by describing the use of the terms in which they are expressed; that what is important in philosophy is the use of a term; that language is a public affair; that philosophy is only descriptive. Let us illustrate these points by considering the techniques of some important philosophers of this group. This method is necessary in view of the fact that despite a measure of unity of procedure among them, they deny that they constitute a philosophical school.

Ryle is the best known ordinary language philosopher and his most influential book is *The Concept of Mind*. It was published in 1948, four years before the publication of the *Philosophical Investigations*, but Ryle's general outlook is entirely in harmony with that of Wittgenstein. Although in style and plan the book is not Wittgensteinian, yet there is agreement on essential points. It is typically Wittgensteinian in that it treats philosophical problems as arising due to the misunderstanding of the logic of concepts. Moreover, Wittgenstein said that philosophical problems are solved not by giving new information but by arranging what we have always known. Ryle makes the same point in the introduction : "The philosophical arguments which constitute this book are intended not to increase what we know about minds, but to rectify the logical geography of the knowledge which we

already possess.⁸² It describes the logic of the mental concepts systematically and on a large scale. Ryle conceives philosophy as the search 'for logical forms' in 1931;⁸³ 'for logical categories or types' in 1937,⁸⁴ 'for logical powers' in 1945,⁸⁵ 'for the logical geography of our concepts' in 1949.⁸⁶ Thus finally he describes the philosopher as a cartographer of concepts. His business is not to investigate the nature of reality, truth or meaning, but to relate and distinguish and place logically the expressions which we use to say about things. It is his attempt, to use Wittgenstein's dictum, "to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use."

In *The Concept of Mind* Ryle analyses the concepts of a particular family, known as mental concepts. In everyday life, says Ryle echoing Wittgenstein's ideas, we feel no difficulty with these concepts; we use them without any trouble. For example, we know how to decide whether a man is intelligent or stupid, whether he is doing something deliberately, or whether he is thinking out a problem, and so forth. But we become puzzled, when we try to settle these problems philosophically. We can remove these puzzles and correct the mistakes generated by them, by mapping and determining the geographical position of these concepts. In short,

82. Ryle, G.: *The Concept of Mind*, p. 7.

83. Ryle, G.: 'Systematically Misleading Expressions', *PAS*, 1931, reprinted in *Logic And Language I*.

84. Ryle, G.: 'Categories', *PAS*, 1937.

85. Ryle G.: 'Philosophical Arguments', (Inaugural Lecture, 1945).

86. Ryle, G.: *The Concept of Mind*, 1949.

what is required is a clear grasp of the logic of the mental concepts.

First a myth has to be destroyed : the Cartesian myth that mental expressions refer to a queer sort of entity, mind or soul or spirit, similar in its actions to bodily processes except being inaccessibly private. This official theory which he deliberately describes as "the dogma of the Ghost in the Machine" is, he thinks, not merely itself mistaken, but has led to a group of interconnected and characteristic mistakes.⁸⁷ In Wittgenstein's phrase, a picture has held the advocates of this theory captive, and Ryle's purpose is to break its hold.

Ryle says that 'the dogma of the Ghost in the Machine' rests on a special type of mistake which he terms as a category-mistake. A category mistake "is the presentation of facts belonging to one category in the idiom appropriate to another."⁸⁸ That is to say, it consists in the allocation of "concepts to logical types to which they do not belong."⁸⁹ And "the logical type or category to which a category belongs is the set of ways in which it is logically legitimate to operate with it."⁹⁰ Ryle says that when two terms belong to the same category it makes sense to conjoin or disjoin them.

87. Ryle, G., The Concept of Mind, pp. 15-16.

88. Ibid, p. 8.

89. Ibid, p. 17.

90. Ibid, p. 8.

But the phrase 'there occur mental processes' does not mean the same sort of thing as 'there occur physical processes', and therefore, they cannot be conjoined or disjoined.⁹¹ However, the advocates of the official theory commit this mistake. "The belief that there is a polar opposition between Mind and Matter is the belief that they are terms of the same logical type."⁹² The official theory is based on a radical bifurcation of mind and body. A category mistake, thus, consists in misrepresenting the use of the expression or expressions in the use of which a concept is applied. In the case of mental terms the category mistake consists in the belief that they name any entity whatever. We have already seen how Wittgenstein showed that 'sensation' and other mental terms do not get their meanings by naming occult entities or inner processes, and that they are not names in the sense in which 'tables' and 'trees' are names.

The official theory which Ryle attempts to explode maintains that man is made up of two entities, a body and a mind; that these entities interact, so that the mental processes cause the bodily events. Thus, to take a few instances, we act from anger, prudence, indulgence, envy, vanity, and so forth. Or we are angry, prudent, indulgent, envious and the rest. To explain actions by means of mental concepts is to give a causal explanation -- the causes being

91. Ibid, p. 22.

92. Ibid, p. 22.

inner, private, mental processes. If a man is doing something, two things are taking place in him -- the physical action and the mental process. While the physical process is publicly observable, the mental process is known only to the agent. This way of describing the mental concepts is full of difficulties, such as 'how can the mind and the body interact upon each other?', and 'how can we know another person's mental states?'.⁹³

Hyle says that these explanations are sham explanations and the difficulties arise due to our failure to understand the logic of these mental concepts. His own view is that the statements employing mental terms are not categorical but semi-hypothetical. To say that X's action is prompted by vanity, is not to give a cause, but to explain it by referring to a trait of character, namely vanity. To say that a man is vain, is not to say that he is experiencing a particular feeling called vanity. It is only a hypothetical statement, as are all other statements describing certain traits of character, dispositions, tendencies, motives etc. Vanity is neither an internal nor an external phenomenon. It is only a mode of behaviour, and can be known whether in my own case or in that of others, by observation of behaviour. I have no privileged access. After considering many other cases, Hyle concludes, like Wittgenstein, that the criteria of

93. Ibid, p. 87.

determining the validity of mental acts are publicly observable activities and the situations in which actions are performed. Thus the criterion of whether a man has performed something attentively or carefully is not the experience of certain internal, private mental phenomena, but rather, how one acts and responds to appropriate questions. It is to say nothing about causes. As Ryle says, "My performance has a special procedure or manner, not special antecedents."⁹⁴ Similarly, even the unconscious is described only by hypothetical and not by categorical statements. Confusion between causes and laws, between the categorical and the hypothetical, leads to absurd doctrines. The logic of mental concepts makes it clear that 'knowing how' is dispositional, and 'disposition' is not a name. "A statement ascribing a dispositional property to a thing has much, though not everything, in common with a statement subsuming the thing under a law."⁹⁵

He shows that the traditional theories of consciousness and introspection are logical muddles.⁹⁶ Talking about sensations he says, "One of the central negative motives of this book is to show that 'mental' does not denote a status".⁹⁷ It is false to say, according to Ryle, that we witness our sensations -- "they are not the sorts of things of which it makes sense to say that they are witnessed or unwitnessed at all,

94. Ibid, p. 32.

95. Ibid, p. 43.

96. Ibid, p. 135.

97. Ibid, p. 199.

even by me.⁹⁸ In other words, sensations are neither observable nor unobservable. He maintains like Wittgenstein, that there is a philosophically unexciting sense of 'private' in which of course my sensations are private. But he shows that it is only a logical point.

In his other book the Dilemmas, Ryle turns to another of Wittgenstein's main themes : the problem how we are to overcome the apparently irresolvable dilemmas which beset the philosopher. Ryle shows that such conflicts are only apparent ones -- pseudo conflicts. In his articles "The Theory of Meaning"⁹⁹ and "Meaning and Necessity",¹⁰⁰ Ryle vindicates Wittgenstein's views about meaning and use. In his 'Ordinary Language',¹⁰¹ Ryle discusses the methodological problems of ordinary language philosophy which represents both his agreements with and differences from Wittgenstein.

Lastly I would like to mention one important point of difference, among others, between Wittgenstein and Ryle, viz., on the interpretation of mental terms. Ryle anticipates that his account of mental concepts will bring him the charge of behaviourism.¹⁰² And he says, whenever he gets an occasion,

98. Ibid, p. 205.

99. Included in *British Philosophy in the Mid-Century*, edited by C.A. Mace.

100. *Philosophy*, 1949.

101. FR, 1953, reprinted in *Ordinary Language Philosophy*, edited by V.C. Chappell.

102. Ryle, G., *The Concept of Mind*, p. 16.

that he is not denying the mental life. Usually he keeps his promises, but there are in his book some traces of behaviourism. He does maintain a simpler thesis that there really exist only bodies, that there really occur only physical processes, and that all statements about mental events are really statements describing bodily behaviour. Thus he says : "Of course it is part of my general thesis that the supposed occult processes are themselves mythical; there exists nothing to be the object of the postulated diagnoses." ¹⁰³ It is, now, worthwhile to recall what Wittgenstein says about the mental processes. He too apprehends the charge of denying mental facts and inner experiences, and asserts that his investigation is only grammatical. Wittgenstein, if my interpretation is correct, sticks to his words. He never denies the existence of inner processes or private experiences. Nor does he ever maintain that mental statements are really statements about overt bodily behaviour. What he denies rather is the view that what is important in giving meaning to mental terms is the existence of inner, inaccessible private processes, and not the situations and publicly observable activities of human beings. He is concerned with the criteria of the use of mental conduct expressions, and not with the status of mental events.

I wish to consider now the general outline of Straw-
son's philosophical technique. If Ryle combines the techniques

103. *Ibid.*, p. 54.

of Aristotle and Wittgenstein, Strawson employs Wittgenstein's methodology to describe what he calls 'scaled down Kantianism'. Strawson accepts many things that are Wittgensteinian-- particularly the views about language -- but his theories are unique and independent. He attempts to reconcile description with metaphysics, and in the process of completing this task he transcends the limits prescribed by both Wittgenstein and ordinary language philosophers. He is not content with mere description of concepts. So he says about the task of the philosopher : "Up to a point, the reliance upon a close examination of the actual use of words is the best, and indeed the only sure, way in philosophy. But the discriminations he can make, and the connections we can establish, in this way, are not general enough and not far-reaching enough to meet the full metaphysical demand for understanding He must abandon his only sure guide¹⁰⁴ when the guide cannot take him as far as he wishes to go." However, for my purpose, a brief discussion of his views about language would be enough -- the full discussion of his metaphysics being out of scope of the present dissertation.

¹⁰⁵
Strawson's "On Referring" is a good example of Oxford philosophy, and it would be profitable to start with it. Strawson's paper is Wittgensteinian in the sense that it takes the problem it attacks to be arising from a mistaken conception of meaning. It maintains, to say very generally, that the

104. Strawson, P.F., *Individuals*, pp. 9-10.

105. Published in *Mind*, 1960. Reprinted in *Essays in Conceptual Analysis*, edited by Antony Flew.

meaning of an expression is not what it denotes, but the rules of its use. He develops his views by criticising Russell's famous paper 'On Denoting'.¹⁰⁶ There are many points in this paper which are very illuminating.

Russell's chief concern is with "the" expressions. His contention is that all propositions beginning with "the", such as "the present king of France is bald" should be construed as existential; and not as subject-predicate propositions. He makes this recommendation to enable us to talk about non-existent and self-contradictory entities, without assuming their existence. If I say "the present king of France is bald", what I say can be regarded as significant, although it is a false assertion, because there is no present king of France. Now Strawson's refutation of this Russellian view is based on the examination of the actual logical behaviour of "the" expressions. Expressions of this sort have what Strawson calls a uniquely referring use. Russell's thesis, Strawson points out, rests on the assumption that to be significant a statement must have a truth-value. He, therefore, introduces a trichotomy: every statement must be true or false or meaningless. What Strawson rejects is Russell's trichotomy. He also rejects Russell's claim that a sentence can be significant only if what is named by the logical subject exists.

106. Published in *Mind*, 1905, Reprinted in *Logic and Language*, edited by Marsh.

Strawson while rejecting Russell's claims makes two important points. First, he makes a distinction between an expression (or sentence) and its use in a statement. Secondly, he says that an expression (or sentence) may be significant without being true or false. To say that an expression is meaningful is not to say anything about its use on a particular occasion. Telling the meaning of the expression is not telling to whom it refers : "..... for the expression itself does not refer to anything; though it can be used, on different occasions, to refer to innumerable things."¹⁰⁷ Similarly, "we cannot talk of the sentence being true or false, but only of its being used to make a true or false assertion."¹⁰⁸ Next, to say that expressions are meaningful is not to say that there are existent objects to which they refer. To say they are meaningful is to say there are rules, habits, conventions governing correct use. A sentence (or expression) in itself is neither true nor false, although it can be used to make true or false statements. Further, a sentence is used to make a true or false assertion only if the person using it is talking about something. If, when he utters it, he is not talking about anything, then his use is not a genuine one, but a spurious or pseudo-one. If I say today "the present king of France is bald", my utterance is neither true nor false, but pointless. Strawson thus rejects the view that

107. Strawson, P.F., 'On Referring', *Mind*, 1950, p. 328.

108. *Ibid.*, p. 328.

every significant sentence is either true or false. A correct understanding of the actual logic of language makes it clear that there may be many uses of a sentence about which the question of truth-value simply does not arise.

110
Strawson's papers on 'Truth' are a brilliant application of the techniques of descriptive philosophy. His contention is that the philosophical problem of truth is the problem of the elucidation of the logical features of our actual use of the expressions, 'true', 'is true', 'not true' and 'false'. The philosophers who have dealt with the problem of truth have rarely, says Strawson, examined the actual uses of these expressions. Strawson rejects the traditional theories of truth as based on the misunderstanding of language. Then he describes some important uses of 'true', which are central in any attempt to solve the problem of truth. They are : the confirmatory use, the admissive use, the concessive use, the agreeing use, the novelty use, and so on. 'Is true' is used to confirm, grant, concede etc., what has already been said.

Strawson is the first ordinary language philosopher
111
to have written a complete book on the logic of ordinary

109. H.L.A. Hart in his article 'A Logician's Fairy Tale' published in The Philosophical Review, 1951 discusses the fictional use of language.

110. Strawson, P.F., 'Truth' Analysis, June, 1949 and 'Truth', PAS, Supplementary Vol. XLIV.

111. Introduction to Logical Theory, 1952.

expressions. He does not reject formal logic which serves useful purposes in a 'context-free' discourse. It may even be accepted as a complementary system of ordinary logic. The fault with formal logic, however, is that it cannot exhibit the functions of the actual use of words. Formal logicians confine their attention to relatively context-free sentences which are not ordinarily used. A formal logic needs, therefore, to be supplemented by a logic of ordinary use of words. It must be remembered that even Wittgenstein was not against ideal languages; what he denied is their usefulness in philosophy which is concerned with actual language-games. Similarly, the Oxford philosophers think that the real value of symbolic logic to philosophy is purely negative. It offers artificially constructed uses of language which the philosopher can employ as a contrasting model in seeking the ramifications of the actual use.

But is ^{the} ~~is~~ individuals which distinguishes Strawson from both Wittgenstein and his own Oxford colleagues. In his Critical Notice of the Philosophical Investigations, ¹¹² while commenting on Wittgenstein's restrictive view of philosophy, Strawson gives hints of his own programme : "We might make room for a purged kind of metaphysics, with more modest and less disputable claims than the old." ¹¹³ In the Individuals he describes this purged kind of metaphysics as descriptive

¹¹². Ibid, 1954.
¹¹³. Ibid, p. 78.

metaphysics. He says in the introduction : "Descriptive metaphysics is content to describe the actual structure of our thought about the world, revisionary metaphysics is concerned to produce a better structure."¹¹⁴ Making the idea more clear he says, "The idea of descriptive metaphysics is likely to be met with scepticism. How should it differ from what is called philosophical or conceptual analysis? It does not differ in kind of intention, but only in scope and generality."¹¹⁵ While writing about his method, he makes his departure more pronounced. He asks us to abandon the only sure guide when the guide cannot take us as far as we wish to go. He is, however, careful to add that he is not concerned with conceptual change. He says that "there is a massive central core of human thinking which has no history or none recorded in histories of human thought; there are categories and concepts which, in their most fundamental character, change not at all..... It is with these, their connections, and the structure that they form, that a descriptive metaphysics will be primarily concerned."¹¹⁶ A careful study of the Individuals in which he deals with the problems of identification, material objects, persons, monads, subject-predicate, logical subjects and existence, etc. reveals, to say very generally, that at times the demarcating lines between descriptive metaphysics and revisionary metaphysics are blurred. In his discussion

¹¹⁴. Strawson, P.F., Individuals, p: 9.

¹¹⁵. Ibid, p. 9.

¹¹⁶. Ibid, p. 10.

of P-predicates, to take just one instance, Strawson accepts both the identification of sensations and feelings by the experiencer, and their description in private language, -theses which are generally rejected by Wittgenstein and ordinary language philosophers.

We proceed now to discuss, briefly, some important papers which would enable us to understand both the Wittgensteinian approach to philosophy and the spirit of ordinary language philosophy. An important problem of the philosophies we are discussing is concerned with meaning. The works, which we have already considered, have launched a powerful attack on the naming theory of meaning. There is a new theory of meaning, namely, one developed by the logical positivists, which is equally unacceptable. If the meaning of an expression is determined by the language-games in which it has a role, i.e., by rules and conventions, then the verification theory of meaning must go. The implications of the later works of Wittgenstein are as much against logical positivism, as they were against logical atomism. His views about meaning and language make the verification theory retire. In this connection, Warnock's paper on 'Verification and the use of Language'¹¹⁷ is especially important. It shows the difference between ordinary language philosophy and logical positivism,

117. Warnock, G.J., 'Verification and use of Language',
Revue internationale de philosophie, no. 17-18,
1961.

a very important point which the hostile critics generally ignore Warnock says that all variations of the principle -- "the meaning of a proposition is the method of its verification" -- are full of difficulties. The term 'proposition' is vague. If it means "the meaning of a sentence" it renders the principle absurd; for it then means "the meaning of a meaning of a sentence is the method of its verification." But even if we accept the principle, the following difficulties arise.

In the first place, the phrase "method of verification" is inappropriate. We speak of methods of verification in the situations where the methods consist in the carrying out of definite, elaborate procedures. But is there a method of verifying that grass is green and that the sky on a clear day is blue? What method of verification could I follow in assuring myself that I have a headache? If someone says "Here is a book", holding it out to me, do I resort to a method of verifying what he says? We look at the grass and the sky; I feel my headache; I see the book that is offered to me. "Looking, feeling, and seeing are not methods of verification; no one has to be taught how to see and to feel, and no one claims to be an expert by reason of his mastery of these accomplishments."¹¹⁸

Secondly, Warnock points out, verification is related

118. Ibid, p. 9. Note (1) : It is here important to note that Wittgenstein had already raised this point in his lectures (1930-33).

to truth or falsity. For to verify *p* is to find out whether or not *p* is true. But what about all those sentences which have no concern with truth or falsity? That is, what about imperative sentences, interrogative sentences, sentences used in making promises, giving verdicts etc.? How can we verify, even in the weakest sense, sentences expressing prayers, proposals, orders and decisions?

119

Thirdly, for reasons given by Strawson, sentences cannot be said to be true or false. They can be used to say true or false, verifiable or unverifiable statements, but that is a different matter. As Warnock says : "To know the meaning of a sentence is to know how to use it, to know in what circumstances its use is correct or incorrect A sentence is meaningful if it has a use; we know its meaning if we know its use."

121

Another important paper which I wish to consider is Urnson's 'On Grading'. This paper is intended to reject the positivistic trichotomy of cognitive meaning or emotive meaning or meaningless (or nonsense). Urnson maintains that words have many functions which cannot be exhausted by the above classification. In this paper he studies the use of sentences that function as evaluations. Words like 'yellow',

122

119. Note (8) : This point is also discussed by Wittgenstein in his *Philosophical Investigations*.

120. Note (3) : We have considered them above.

121. Warnock, G.J., 'Verification And the Use of Language', *Revue internationale de philosophie*, 1961, p. 12.

122. Published in *Mind*, 1960, reprinted in *Logic And Language II* edited by A. Flew.

'long', 'square' are descriptive. But often we use sentences whose predicates are not descriptive, but evaluative -- words like 'good', 'bad', 'first-rate' etc. Some philosophers have tried to prove that these are mere emotive words. Urason's contention is that they are neither descriptive nor meaningless but evaluative.

He starts with the example of grading apples. Let us imagine that there are only two 'grading labels' for apples, good and bad. Whether an apple is good or bad depends on various empirical properties of the apple, which are accepted as its criteria. The use of the word 'good', in this case, depends on the empirical properties of the apple. Descriptions of the apple framed in such language are, therefore, the criteria for the use of the sentence, 'This apple is good'. Apples, however, are not the only things that are graded. There are other things to be graded and their criteria are different. Now there are two possibilities : either what the word 'good' means is the criteria for its use, in which case it would have countless meanings; or it can be held that the word 'good' has only one meaning, in which case its meaning is not identical with the criteria for a thing being called good. Urason says that if the first view, known in ethics as Naturalism, is accepted, it will make the use of 'good' empirical. ¹²³ He shows that the term 'good' has only one

123. Urason, J.C., 'On Grading', reprinted in *Logic and Language II*, edited by A. Flew, p. 173.

meaning. And this is so because I know that a thing is good, even if I do not know its criteria. I cannot justify it, but I know it. But if the meaning of the statement were dependent on its truth-conditions, then I should not be able to understand it, as I do. I can understand it, says Urason, because the word 'good' is used as a grading label. 'Good' is not the name of a quality, naturalistic or non-naturalistic. It is not a name at all.

Thus to use the sentence 'This is good' is to grade, and to grade is to do nothing except grading : "At some step we must say firmly (why not now?) that to describe is to describe, to grade is to grade, and to express one's feeling is to express one's feelings, and that none of these is reducible to either of the others; nor can any of them be reduced to, be defined in terms of, anything else."¹²⁴ To say 'This is good' is neither to describe a thing, nor to express one's feelings. The sentences 'I like it' and 'This is good' belong to two different logical categories. To say 'This is good' is to evaluate a thing. This conclusion vindicates Wittgenstein's view that in order to understand a philosophical problem we must look at the actual use of the words in which the problem is expressed.

We have noticed how Wittgenstein attempted to show that language is not essentially descriptive, rather it has countless

124. Ibid, p. 171.

acts to perform. The Oxford philosophers have studied the various uses of language such as performatory (Austin), ascriptive (H.L.A. Hart), evaluative (Urson), and so forth. In this direction Austin has done most valuable researches; and any account of Oxford philosophy is bound to remain incomplete without a discussion of his work. But I have deliberately put his name in the last for the reason that he can be said to be influenced by Wittgenstein in a very general sense. The philosophers we have discussed, always insist that though their aim is to study the logic of ordinary language, their work is not philological. They do not indulge in close linguistic analyses. They study ordinary language in order to solve (or dissolve) philosophical puzzles, to understand their nature, and to describe the categories and concepts leading to them in detail and systematically. But Austin's work is more linguistic than philosophical. His articles are more philological in character than anything said by others. Some of his papers are good examples of lexicography brought to bear directly on philosophical problems. He can thus be held to be influenced by Wittgenstein only in a general and remote sense. He is a Wittgensteinian, if at all he is, only in the sense that he accepts certain general ideas of a movement which owes its existence to Wittgenstein.

Leaving a few earlier papers such as 'Are There A Priori Concepts?' (1939) and 'The Meaning of a Word' (1940), Austin seldom comes to a problem directly. Rather he starts with,

and even confines his discussions to, topics 'neighbouring,
analogous or germane in some way to some notorious centre of
philosophical trouble', or "field work" as he calls it.

This is an important feature of his technique which distinguishes him from others, and for which he offers a justification. 'Pretending' (1958), 'Performative Utterances' (1960) and 'How to Talk' (1963) are good examples of his lexicographical technique in philosophy. Wittgenstein never felt a need to justify his method, because he was directly concerned with philosophical problems. But Austin's field-work -- researches are often directed to "expressions at a second or third remove from the expressions occurring in the statement of some philosophical theory and which are the key words in some piece of puzzlement." For example, instead of an investigation of 'being angry' or 'know', he studies in detail the uses of 'pretending'. While 'examining what we should say when, and so, why and what we should mean by it, he carries out his researches in areas of language which are neighbouring to some philosophical difficulty, rather than those which lead to difficulties. He justifies his technique by assuring us that it has both usefulness and philosophical point. He repeatedly says that it will resolve or remove a problem, that it will clear up mistakes in philosophy, and

125. Austin, J.L., *Philosophical Papers*, p. 131.

126. *Ibid*, p. 131.

127. Ambrose, A., 'Austin's *Philosophical Papers*', *Philosophy*, July, 1963, p. 202.

128. Austin, J.L., *Philosophical Papers*, p. 129.

129. *Ibid*, pp. 99, 128.

130. *Ibid*, pp. 98-99, 99-100, 179, 197, 239.

that it will enable philosophers to come to an agreement.¹³¹

Austin's starting point thus is ordinary language; not that ordinary language is free from all troubles, but if not 'the last word', 'only remember, it is the first word'.¹³² The advantages of investigating ordinary language, especially neighbouring areas of a philosophical difficulty, are that it is not infected with the jargon of traditional philosophy, so that the chances are better for correcting older and hastier theories.¹³³ Moreover, he says elsewhere, it is useful to study ordinary language because, "ordinary words are much subtler in their uses, and mark many more distinctions than philosophers have realised."¹³⁴ He proposes, therefore, to have "a true and comprehensive science of language", "a revised and enlarged Grammar".¹³⁵

A careful study of the uses of words, or the development of "a revised and enlarged Grammar" will enable us, says Austin, to solve philosophical problems. Like Wittgenstein, he characterises philosophical problems as muddles which must be got rid of.¹³⁶ In the *Sense And Sensibilia*, he uses such expressions for them as 'plain nonsense', 'grossly tendentious', 'wantonly wrong', 'wanton misuse', 'completely mad', 'wildly

131. Ibid, p. 131.

132. Ibid, p. 133.

133. Ibid, p. 135.

134. Austin, J.L., *Sense And Sensibilia*, p. 3.

135. Austin, J.L., *Philosophical Papers*, p. 180.

136. Austin, J.L., *Sense And Sensibilia*, pp. 10, 47, 100, 30, 48, 122.

wrong', 'perfectly absurd' etc. But unlike Wittgenstein, he never attributes the character of depth to them. This explains the difference that we find in their ways of doing philosophy. Their ways were very different; their temperament and approach almost diametrically opposed. Wittgenstein was a man of strongly metaphysical temper, and aimed at depth of insight in philosophy. Austin was a man of cool and dry temperament. His aim in philosophy is to arrive at plain, unvarnished truths.

In some of his works such as 'Performative Utterances' and How To Do Things With Words, he has devoted his energies to distinguish and classify different types of speech-acts. It is worth recalling here Wittgenstein's remark about the multiplicity of the use of words. But Austin goes beyond the suggestions of Wittgenstein in his study of the linguistic discriminations, with a science of language in view. It is however, doubted even by ordinary language philosophers¹³⁷ whether the linguistic discriminations in which he engages are often relevant to a philosophical difficulty.

To conclude, both the 'therapeutic' and 'pure research' groups, which have dominated the scene of contemporary English philosophy, are greatly indebted to Wittgenstein's ideas directly or indirectly. Further, it is his method that is most influential. But it would be simply misleading to maintain that the ordinary language philosophers are doing

137. P.G. Ambrose, A., 'Austin's Philosophical Papers', Philosophy, July, 1963, p. 216.

philosophy exactly in the sense in which Wittgenstein conceived it. They have used his method in their own ways, and, I must say, they have developed it in two different directions, neither of which would have been fully approved by Wittgenstein. Neither a psycho-analytic explanation of philosophical puzzles nor a revised and enlarged grammar is traceable in Wittgenstein's works. This explains, perhaps, why he deplored his own influence.

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